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# THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

1824—1924

ITS ORIGIN AND MEANING,  
PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS

By ARTHUR SHADWELL

M.A., M.D., LL.D.

PART II.  
THE NEW PHASE

1914—1924



LONDON  
PHILIP ALLAN & CO., LTD.  
QUALITY COURT, CHANCERY LANE

*Published in 1925.  
Second Impression, 1925.*

*and Printed in Great Britain by  
The Camelot Press Limited,  
Southampton.*

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## PART II

### CHAPTER I

#### BOLSHEVISM

THE second phase of Socialism came to an end with the outbreak of war, which immediately knocked the movement to pieces. The International, which had a semblance of unity because it never came to grips with reality, burst like a pricked bubble when it did, and dissolved away. The real tie of nationality was found to be still far stronger than the imaginary class unity which Socialists had brought themselves to believe in by the repetition of phrases. The proletariat had never had much to do with it, and such interest as they had taken in it had rather diminished than increased with time, under the hegemony of German Marxian theorists. It had no hold on them at all, as the event proved in every country. It had very little hold on the Socialist leaders themselves. With few exceptions they stood up for their respective countries like ordinary folk.

As soon as it became clear that the German plan had gone wrong and the German cause was in danger, attempts to reconstruct the International were set on foot, but without success during the war. An account of them is given later on. When the International movement was re-started after



the war it was quite different. Socialism had entered on a new phase, which I call the third. Its most distinctive feature is that in it the theories of the second phase are being put to the test of practical experience.

The first effectual move towards it came directly out of the war. This was the Russian Revolution of 1917. It was primarily political, and the earliest of the many political revolutions brought about by the war; but, unlike the great French Revolution, which is the only comparable historical event, it soon developed a social and economic character, and eventually brought into being a complete national Socialist system—the first in modern history. This occurred in three stages. The Tsar abdicated in March 1917, and a provisional coalition Government was set up, which, after some changes, passed into the hands of the moderate Socialists, whose leader was Kerensky. So far the Revolution had proceeded in a constitutional, and for so great a change an orderly, manner. But in November (October by the Russian calendar) the Bolshevist party seized the reins of government by an act of force. The story has been briefly told by Trotsky in a pamphlet entitled *From the October Revolution to the Treaty of Brest*, which has, I believe, been translated into English. My copy is one published by the Bolshevist Press, established for a short time at Berne, in Switzerland, but closed down in 1919 by the Federal Government. I have made some use of it in what follows because in dealing with Bolshevism it is advisable to rely as far as possible on the authentic utterances of its leaders, which cannot be denied or explained away.

Now Bolshevism is the great outstanding phenomenon of the new phase of Socialism, and the most complete, though not the only, example of what I called just now its most distinctive feature—namely, the submission of Socialist theory to the test of experience. Previously this had been done only in the form of small model communities founded by various enthusiasts, the local and ephemeral experiments of 1848 and of the Commune in 1871, both in Paris. The new experience is of an entirely different character, and infinitely more important; and since Bolshevism is the earliest in time, and by far the greatest experiment yet attempted, an examination of the new phase, in which we now are, naturally opens with an account of it.

Defined in a single phrase, Bolshevism is extreme revolutionary Marxism in operation; it is an attempt to realise the Communist Manifesto, which is the 'Gospel of the present revolution' (*Bukharin*). Its principles, as expounded by Lenin in numerous publications, are all drawn from the revolutionary teaching of Marx and Engels, and its practice is justified on their authority; publications of the Bolshevik Press, of which I possess copies, bear on the title-page the concluding words of the Communist Manifesto—'Proletarians of all lands, unite!' But there is no need to labour the proof; the wordy and acrimonious controversy carried on between Lenin and Trotsky on the one hand and Kautsky on the other, turns entirely on what Marx and Engels said. The Bolsheviks prefer one interpretation, the Social-Democrats, whose most eminent spokesman is Kautsky, long the theoretical leader of the German Socialists, prefer another;

and nothing else matters to either, which shows the paralysing effect of Marxism on the mind, or conversely the attraction it has for men incapable of original thought. The controversy is quite interminable, because equal warrant can be found in those ambiguous writers for both views, and also, at a pinch, for the policy of Reformism, which is a third. These differences have always existed within the movement from its beginning ; but the effect of passing from talk to action in the new phase of Socialism has naturally been to accentuate them, and this is one of the most salient features of the present situation.

The origin of the word 'Bolshevik' is given by Lenin himself in his little book *The State and Revolution*, written in the summer of 1917. He calls it 'a meaningless and barbarous term, which expresses nothing but the purely accidental fact that at the Brussels-London Conference of 1903 we had a majority (*Bolshinstvo*).' This shows that Bolshevism as a theory or policy was not created by the war, which only provided its opportunity, in accordance with a prediction made in 1905 by Jaurès, who warned the 'ruling classes' that a European war might let loose revolution. The Bolshevik form of Marxism had been in existence for years as an organised movement in Russia ; and behind it is a long history of political, social and economic agitations and changes, of which only a brief outline can here be given. But some knowledge of them is necessary for an intelligent comprehension of Russian affairs.

The underlying causes of agitation and revolution in Russia were the same as in other countries, but

modified by various special conditions, of which the more important were a vast area inhabited by a large but scattered population, embracing several races, preponderantly rural (in 1910 the proportion of rural to urban was 87 per cent. to 13 per cent.), poor and ignorant; communications slow and difficult; political, social and industrial development far behind Western Europe; government by a bureaucratic autocracy and by the Church; semi-feudal conditions in the country; great natural resources and abundant food supply; a peculiar national temperament prone to extremes—extremes of ardour and apathy, of intellectual vigour and profound stolidity, of laziness and industry, of self-indulgence and self-denial, of greed and sacrifice, of submissiveness and revolt, of gentleness and violence, of love and hate 'boundless as the land itself,' as Dr. Mauthner says in his careful study of Bolshevism. It has often been observed that, Kipling notwithstanding, East and West meet and mingle in Russia. I have never seen anywhere such gentle-mannered and indulgent police as in Petersburg in former days, though it was always under martial law; but they were capable of extreme violence and ruthless severity upon occasion.

I may add that popular ideas about Tsarist Russia, derived from political refugees and novels, are absurdly wide of the mark. I have never been in any country where one was so free to do what one pleased, provided one had nothing to do with politics; and the authorities very soon satisfied themselves on that point. Conversely, I know no country where personal conduct is subject to so much petty interference as the United States.

The outstanding dates in the modern history of this singular people before the war of 1914 are 1861, when serfdom was abolished, and 1905, when a constitutional revolution took place. The date of 1861 in itself speaks volumes ; it shows how many centuries behind Western Europe the social evolution of Russia then was, and suggests that the process of overtaking more advanced countries, rendered inevitable by the growth of commercial and intellectual intercourse, was forced at an excessive pace on a people not ready for it. This accounts for a good deal. The development of industry on modern lines had then already begun in Moscow, Petersburg and Poland. In 1850 there were 9,483 factories and workshops, and 318,000 workmen employed in non-agricultural industries ; in 1890 the number of workmen had increased to one and a half millions, and in 1912 to three millions. The largest branch of industry was the textile. But this development was exotic and artificial, so to speak, not a spontaneous growth, as in England ; and it was fostered by a high protective tariff with the idea of making Russia economically independent. It was accompanied by the usual phenomena—strikes and attempted suppression. Strikes became frequent in the 'seventies after the Franco-Prussian War, and the first trade organisations were formed under the leadership of a Petersburg joiner named Chalturin. In 1879 an appeal was issued 'to the working-classes of Petersburg,' in which the old English formula of 1831—'Each for all and all for each,' was repeated.

The industrial disturbances led to a good deal of remedial factory legislation in the 'eighties,

favoured by the Petersburg employers but opposed by others. Among other provisions works managers who provoked a serious strike by illegal acts, such as truck and breach of contract, were made liable to three months' imprisonment and to suspension for two years. None the less strikes again became frequent in the early 'nineties, being stimulated by the famine of 1891 and by depression of trade; in 1892 the first of the numerous general strikes took place at Lodz in Poland. Poles and Jews were foremost in the movement, which began to assume a political complexion and to pass under Socialist influence. In 1897 a general ministerial order directed the local police authorities to place all strike agitators under arrest, which did not prevent an outbreak of general strikes at Riga and Libau in 1899. This outbreak is regarded as a turning-point in the Lettish Labour movement, which played a great part in the revolution of 1905.

The strike and trade union movement of factory workmen, originally quite spontaneous, was only one, and not the most important, of three movements which came together in the revolution of 1905; but it must be taken into account in any study of Bolshevism, because the town workmen are supposed to form the proletariat proper, whose interests are the excuse for the class war, and whose 'dictatorship' the Bolsheviks profess to have set up. The other movements were those of the peasantry and of the revolutionary intellectuals, whose instruments were the town workmen on the one hand and the peasantry on the other. The latter are the most important element in the whole story, not only because they form the vast majority of the

population, but also because the great question in Russia ever since the freeing of the peasants in 1861 has been that of the land. The triumph and the failure of Bolshevism both turn mainly on the peasantry and the land question, which we must therefore briefly explain.

The abolition of serfdom was accompanied by onerous conditions which led to numerous risings. The land remained the property of the large land-owners and of the State,<sup>1</sup> and though provision was made for the peasants to acquire it from the land-owners they got too little and had to pay too dearly for what they did get. Moreover it did not come into their free personal possession, but into the control of the Mir or local Commune, which became a great and growing grievance, because each member had no compact holding but a dozen or more patches scattered about and often at a distance. Moreover, a fresh partition took place every twelve or eighteen years, with the result that the more capable and industrious members, who had cultivated their holdings well and perhaps extended them, had often to give them up to idle and drunken neighbours, who happened to have large families, and were themselves forced to take neglected and inferior land. This attempt to level natural inequalities not only aroused the resentment of its victims, but was fatal to the land itself and the general prosperity.

The Mir system was, in fact, extraordinarily uneconomic and in a large measure responsible for

<sup>1</sup> The large amount of land held by the State under the Bolshevik Government is often represented as a result of the revolution and an example of nationalisation. According to Trotsky (*Russia in the Revolution*) the proportion of land owned by the State and the Crown in 1860 was 67 per cent. of the whole.

the famine of 1891. Its real character is quite misunderstood by many Socialists, who know nothing of the facts and are misled by terms. The Mir was not, as they suppose, a relic of that primitive Communism for which they cherish so much affection; it had grown up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a local combination for the payment of taxes, and in the days of serfdom, which was also a comparatively modern institution, it had been a help and a protection. But after 1861 it gradually became, with the development of independent peasant agriculture, a burden and a hindrance; it was obsolete. Between 1861 and 1892 sixty million acres of land passed from the nobles to the peasants, but it was less well cultivated, largely because of the Mir system, which hampered the more enterprising peasants. Another condition adversely affecting the rural population was the growing competition of the manufacturing towns with the domestic industries (*Kustari*) with which the peasants eked out their living. Agrarian reforms in 1881 gave them easier terms, and for a time pacified them, but eventually led to further trouble.

Such were the main conditions in town and country on which the intellectual revolutionaries (the *intelligentsia*) had to work. The bulk of the people in both were poor and discontented, and though their grievances were different and their interests antagonistic there was a certain bond between them. The town workmen were recruited from the poorer peasants, who migrated in increasing numbers with the growth of population and the development of industry, as elsewhere. The revolutionary agitation in those days took many forms and passed through



various phases. No doubt it went back in its origin to the French Revolution, and Bakunin was not alone in his aspirations as a student at Moscow University in the 'thirties. There was a whole group of ardent young men, including Alexander Herzen, who afterwards became a leader. But it was not until after the emancipation of the serfs that the movement took a more active character.

The most familiar word in this connection is Nihilism, which meant refusal to accept any authority on anything. The term was invented and the cult described by Turgenieff in his novels *Fathers and Sons* (1862) and *The New Generation*, and in 1863 an organisation was formed of groups of young men under the title 'Land and Freedom.' The motive was disappointment with the results of the emancipation of the peasants, and the idea was to go among them, live with them and rouse them up. The plan completely failed, as described by Turgenieff, and attention was turned to the town workmen. The movement was very confused, had no unity, and, as usual, developed all shades of opinion. The notion that Nihilists and Russian revolutionaries were all men of violence and bomb-throwers is a mistake. Some of the chief leaders, such as Herzen, who published the principal paper *Kolokol* (*The Bell*), and Lavroff, were for gradual and evolutionary change; but there was, as always, a left wing and a physical force section, given to secret conspiracy and violent revolution. Bakunin's influence, exercised from abroad, was thrown on this side, and he supported a treasonable conspiracy got up by Netschajeff in 1869. A Russian translation of the Communist Manifesto was published in 1863.

It is not worth while to follow these agitations in detail. The Terrorist, or physical force Party, who were responsible for the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 and other outrages, fulfilled their regular function of preventing real reforms, provoking reaction and ensuring their own suppression; but it is interesting to note that even then the revolutionary parties raised the cry, 'The factories for the workmen, the land for the peasants.' On the suppression of the Anarchist conspiracy groups in the 'eighties, Marxism of the German type began to penetrate the *intelligentsia* and gradually spread. The most active propagandist was Plekhanoff. An illegal labour party was nominally formed in 1898, and immediately divided into two groups on the question whether it should confine itself to an industrial campaign or combine political with industrial action.

Here we first encounter Lenin.<sup>1</sup> He was for the latter policy, which won the day at the third meeting of the party in 1903 held abroad. At once another dispute arose, which split the party into Bolsheviks (majority) and Mensheviks (minority) on the questions of organisation and methods. Lenin was for extreme centralisation and violent methods, and with true Marxian intolerance separated himself from old comrades—Plekhanoff, Axelrod, Martoff

<sup>1</sup>Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianoff (1870-1924), born at Simbirsk—father an official, director of Schools—high-school education—expelled from Kazan University, where he went to study law, for taking part in students' revolutionary movement—qualified for a legal career but took up revolutionary agitation and journalism in Petersburg—published Marxian pamphlets—imprisoned for seditious agitation and subsequently went into exile—wrote an important book, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*—in 1901 founded a paper called *Iskra* (*The Spark*)—returned to Petersburg—second exile in 1907—lived in Paris, Finland, Galicia and Switzerland.

and others who had done the spade work. His policy was condemned at the time by Rosa Luxemburg, who afterwards became a leading German Bolshevik or 'Spartacist,' and was assassinated with Karl Liebknecht, the son of Wilhelm. She called it 'a centralisation based on the blind subjection of all party organisations and their activities down to the smallest details, under a central power which alone thinks, acts and decides for all,' wherein we may recognise the essential character of the present Bolshevik Government, formulated more than twenty years ago. A bitter conflict ensued between the two parties, who carried on separate agitations.

So conditions ripened for the revolution of 1905, which was a sequel of the Japanese War. It was signalised by a general outbreak of strikes in the towns and peasant risings all over the country, both accompanied by violent demonstrations and outrages; the Grand Duke Sergius was assassinated in February. The strikes, which had averaged 550 in number during the previous ten years, rose in 1905 to 14,000, of which 8,000 were political, and they involved nearly three million persons. In Petersburg an attempt made in January, under the leadership of Father Gapon, to march on the Winter Palace to lay various demands before the Tsar, was suppressed with heavy loss of life; whereupon the strike movement broke out, spread rapidly, became universal, and continued for months. The peasants for their part rose and burnt down over 2,000 country houses belonging to landowners. The outbreak became an insurrection, which reached its height in the autumn, and drew a manifesto from the Government, promising constitutional reforms. After this

the wave began to recede, though agitation continued with some mutinies and street fighting. The most interesting incident was the formation of a Labour Council in Petersburg, which declared itself ready, on Marxian principles, to take over the government in the name of the proletariat. This was the origin of the famous Soviets, or workers' and soldiers' councils. Most of the members were Socialists, and Trotsky, then a Menshevik, was vice-president.

The principal reforms that followed in 1906 were the setting up of the Duma as an organ of representative government and extensive changes in the land system. Peasants were allowed to withdraw from the Mir and to become the real owners of a compact and defined holding. The Duma was mainly a failure, but the new land laws which were amended in 1910, and are known as the Stolypin reforms, from the Minister in charge of them, were operated with great activity. Millions of peasants withdrew from the Mir, and large areas of land passed into the possession of their cultivators. In this way a class of contented, well-to-do peasantry coming midway between the territorial magnates and the village poor was formed, and according to Dr. Otto Bauer, the distinguished Austrian Socialist, the process would have achieved its end if time had been allowed ; but the outbreak of war stopped it. On the other hand, this was not the only class of peasants who withdrew from the Mir ; the poorer members also did so in large numbers in order to sell their shares and migrate to the towns or to America.

On the whole the effect of the revolution was

disappointing, particularly to the town workmen. The strike leaders continued to agitate, as they always do after a successful effort, but failed as also they always do in such cases, because no one else wants perpetual agitation. There was a great deal of unemployment in 1906 in consequence of the disturbances of 1905, and the agitators endeavoured to use it for a revival of revolutionary action; but they got no support, and even the more moderate Socialists were against it. Strikes fell off year by year, until in 1910 they reached the low-water mark of 222, involving fewer than 50,000 workmen. But the period of tranquillity passed in turn, and the wave which had receded came back again in 1912—our own great strike year. The strikes rose to over 2,000, involving three-quarters of a million workmen. This revival of agitation was going on when the war broke out.

From the outset the Bolshevik leaders perceived the opportunity afforded by the war and the break-up of the International to found a new one which should be the instrument of world-revolution on their principles. Trotsky, who was in Paris, put the idea forward in September, 1914, in a pamphlet on *The War and the International*; Lenin who was in Switzerland, published in November an appeal, urging an active class-war propaganda during the war, and in the same month an account was opened at the German *Reichsbank* to the credit of Zinovieff and Lunacharsky. Reference has already been made to the attempts to reconstruct the International. Among those who became active in 1915 was Rakovsky, who also proclaimed the class war. This cosmopolitan revolutionary agitator,

whose name has become so well-known in connection with the Anglo-Russian treaty negotiations of 1924, is Bulgarian by birth, Roumanian by nationality, French by professional degree (doctor of medicine) and in sentiment (so he said in the war), but Bolshevik in all. A Socialist congress was arranged for September 1915 at Zimmerwald in Switzerland. All the Russian revolutionary groups were represented at it, and particularly the Jewish *Bund*, which was later to furnish so many prominent members of the Bolshevik Government. A manifesto drafted by Trotsky was issued, denouncing war and demanding peace (on terms favourable to Germany) and among those who signed it were Lenin and other Russians. In April 1916 a second congress of the same kind was held at Kienthal. Peace was again demanded, but was coupled up with the revolutionary class war, which was declared to be the only means of preventing future wars. At this second conference Lenin's influence was more pronounced. Later in the same year an extensive agitation for peace, instigated by Germany, gathered way and was supported everywhere by peace-professing Socialists, although it would have saved, and was intended to save, imperialist, militarist, capitalist Germany from defeat, and left the great War Lord free to make fresh plans. This singular method of combating militarism and capitalism has never been explained. Trotsky, who had been entrusted with the propaganda in France, was very active until he was expelled by the French Government, and went to America by way of Spain early in 1917.

Then came the first Russian revolution, in March.

Its immediate cause was a scarcity of food in Petrograd, due to snow and a break-down of transport. There were bread riots on March 8, and the Tsar's ministers persuaded him to adopt the ill-advised policy of issuing an order suspending the Duma. All along these evil counsellors had wrecked the prospects of constitutional development by reactionary treatment of the Duma. The result was that the Duma ignored the order, formed an executive committee, which took control, demanded the abdication of the Tsar, and appointed a provisional government on March 15. On the same day the Tsar abdicated and was placed under arrest at Tsarskoe Selo.

The first provisional government was of a conservative type and did not last long. It was replaced in May by a more radical one including some Socialists, and this again, in July by a third, with Kerensky, who had held office in the previous ones, at its head. Meanwhile the Bolsheviks had been busy. Lenin had arrived in Petrograd from Switzerland early in April, having been secretly conveyed through Germany in a special train by the German authorities, with whom he had a complete understanding through Swiss and German Socialist intermediaries. Trotsky also speedily arrived from America, and under their guidance the Bolsheviks, financed by Germany, set to work to overthrow the provisional government. It was a case of class war *v.* humanitarian platitudes, as Trotsky puts it. The programme of the moderate Socialists, represented by Kerensky and others, 'consisted through and through of obsolete humanitarian formulas'; instead of civil war and

the ruthless extermination of the bourgeoisie, it stood for the harmonious co-operation of classes and the maintenance of internal order. It is clear from his own account that there was a chance for a united Russia on those lines under the Coalition Government. It had popular support, even from the proletariat of factory workers, as he admits; at the Petrograd municipal elections in June the Bolsheviks polled only 117,760 votes against 674,291 for the other parties.

It is impossible to understand the precise relations of the several Socialist groups—Bolshevist, Menshevist, Social Democratic and Social Revolutionary. The confusion and dissension which have always been a standing feature of the Socialist movement seem to have reached the zenith in Russia. No writer has been able to explain the position. There were many groups, and all of them more or less subject to internal dissension and rapid change. The one man who knew his own mind was Lenin, and immediately on his arrival in Petrograd he put forth his programme in a speech. These were the main points: Immediate peace at any price and without conditions. Conversion of the political into a social revolution by the passing of the State into the hands of the proletariat and poorer peasantry, entailing rupture with all the interests of capital. Support to be refused to the Provisional Government, and power given to the Workers' and Soldiers' Council. The aim, not a parliamentary, but a workers' and soldiers' republic. Dictatorship of the proletariat. Confiscation and nationalisation of land. The banks to be amalgamated into a single national bank under control of the Workers' and Soldiers' councils.



Abolition of police, army and the existing civil service. All officials to be elected and removable, with pay not exceeding the average wage of a good workman.

Such was the Bolshevik programme in outline ; the instrument for realising it was the Workers' and Soldiers' Council—the Soviet. The origin of this institution has been indicated above in the labour council of Petersburg, formed in 1906. From the outset of the first revolution in March 1917 labour councils were rapidly developed and extended at first to soldiers and later to peasants. They began by supporting the Provisional Government, but before long developed an organisation parallel with the government and a rival to it. This was the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets. The Bolsheviks were at first in a minority even in the Petrograd Soviet, which was the most extreme ; Kerensky was its vice-president, which was the reason why he became head of the Coalition Government. He was the only man who commanded sufficient confidence to reconcile the claims of the *de facto* government and the rival Soviets, which grew more and more intrusive.

The circumstance that played into the hands of the Bolsheviks and enabled them to upset him was the continuation of the war, which had become intensely unpopular with the rank and file of the army, who were identical with the peasants. They had expected a double result from the abolition of Tsardom—relief from military service and the possession of more land—but months went by and nothing happened. The Mensheviks had promised both, but with the advent of power came responsibility,

and they found themselves unable to fulfil the expectations they had raised. They could not abandon the war, for that would have been to break faith with the Allies and leave Russia at the mercy of Hohenzollern Germany; nor could they deal with the land, because at the first sign of action the army would have disbanded itself. The peasants who composed it would have taken to their heels and rushed off to their native places to be in at the scramble for the land. The Bolsheviks promised both, and worked on the discontent in the army, which reached a climax with the renewal of the Russian military offensive at the beginning of July, 1917. The first All-Russian Soviet Congress had been held in the previous month and the Bolsheviks, who were in a minority upon it, had attempted to get up an armed demonstration on the occasion. It was prevented, but a little later the failure of the offensive at the front strengthened their hands, and an armed rising under their direction endeavoured to seize the Tauris Palace, in which the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets (still on the side of the Government) were sitting. It failed, but led to street fighting which lasted three days.

It is clearly a mistake to identify Sovietism with Bolshevism. The Soviets were at this time anti-Bolshevist, and Lenin himself declared that he would, if necessary, establish a 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' meaning his own dictatorship, without them. He may be said to have tried it in this July insurrection. The result was failure and reprisals by the Government, which proclaimed the Bolsheviks 'counter-revolutionaries,' suppressed their papers, and published documents showing their

treasonable complicity with the German Government. Trotsky was arrested and Lenin fled to Finland. There followed an interval of comparative quiet, but all the time things went from bad to worse in the army, in the towns and on the land ; and Bolshevik influence grew in all three. The Government were undecided and vacillating ; they would neither come to terms with the Bolsheviks nor join hands firmly with General Korniloff to restore order. The Constituent Assembly, demanded by the Bolsheviks, was not summoned ; anarchy was spreading ; the army, exhausted and demoralised, was unmanageable ; the peasantry began to seize the land, and the workmen demanded the factories. Even then it was not until the Petrograd garrison had been practically won over that Lenin felt the time had come for the long prepared *coup d'état*. The occasion chosen was the second All-Russian Soviet Congress fixed for November 7 (European time). Lenin, who had been constantly writing from Finland, urging more energetic action, came back secretly several days before to direct the proceedings.

The revolution began on November 4 with a parade of the 'proletarian army,' and was consummated on November 7 by the seizure of the Winter Palace, where the Congress was sitting, by armed troops. The Bolshevik leaders kept in the background. They were sitting with the Petrograd Soviet when Trotsky appeared at one o'clock and announced that the Kerensky Government had ceased to exist. Force had, in fact, been used ; there had been some fighting, and the ministers had been arrested and imprisoned with the exception of Kerensky, who escaped.

So the great experiment was inaugurated by an act of violence in direct defiance of all democratic principles, and so it continued. When the Constituent Assembly met in January 1918, on completion of the voting, it was found that the Bolsheviks were in a minority. A resolution proposed on their behalf by Sverdloff was rejected by 273 to 140 votes, and the next day the Council of People's Commissaries—Lenin and his immediate supporters—who had constituted themselves the Government immediately after their *coup d'état*, declared the Assembly dissolved ; nor has any attempt been made to reconstitute it up to now. Compulsion, not consent, was the principle adopted, and its instrument was terrorism, by which it was sought to compel everyone not merely to obey the decrees of the oligarchy, who had seized the reins of power, but to embrace the Bolshevik faith.

The reign of terror in the French Revolution was nothing to that established in Russia, and carried on ever since with intervals of comparative quiescence. Some day, no doubt, the story will be told in full, but meantime there is quite sufficient evidence from Bolshevik sources to confirm the testimony of eye-witnesses. Lenin himself never concealed or attempted to minimise the extreme severity of the methods used ; on the contrary he repeatedly proclaimed them and took credit for them. In his report to the Central Executive in April 1918, he used the expression ' pitiless suppression ' over and over again, and spoke of the non-Bolshevik Socialists as needing suppression at least as much as the bourgeoisie. It was imbecility, he declared, to suppose that Socialism can be

established in any other way. Trotsky, in his account of the revolution, admits cruelties inflicted on officers at the seizure of the military school, speaks of 'unavoidable cruelties and sacrifices,' and says that 'the cleansing of Petrograd from counter-revolutionaries was carried out with great intensity,' while in Moscow the struggle 'assumed an extremely protracted and sanguinary character.' Surely that is sufficient warrant for the charges. In his controversy with Kautsky he defends terrorism by reference to former examples—examples which stink in the pages of history, and which brought reaction and Nemesis upon the perpetrators.

Yet these advocates of pitiless suppression complained bitterly of the incomparably milder measures taken against themselves after their abortive attempt in July to overthrow by force the existing Government, which had been constitutionally set up and had popular support behind it. This attitude is characteristic of the Bolshevist mind. Whatever they do is justified ; when other people do the same thing it becomes monstrous. So with the civil war that followed in 1919-20. Civil war was part of Lenin's programme. In his speech to the Executive Committee in the summer of 1918 he said that 'no Socialist, unless he had lost his senses, would dare to get up in any assembly and maintain that Socialism could be introduced by any other means than civil war.'<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless he held it wrong for anyone else to wage civil war. He is really amusing on the subject of war and violence in general. 'Socialism,' he says, 'is altogether opposed to violence against man, but no one has

<sup>1</sup> *Der Kampf um das Brod*, p. 34.

yet drawn the conclusion that Socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. The same holds good about violence against nations. Every war implies violence against nations, but that does not prevent the Socialists from being in favour of a *revolutionary* war.<sup>1</sup> Very well, then. If one revolutionary war is justified, so is another. He himself overthrew a revolutionary government by force ; it is obviously open to anyone else to treat his own administration in the same way, and so on to infinity. But he will not allow that. People who try to overthrow him are 'counter-revolutionaries,' and therefore worthy of death. Yet when he was a counter-revolutionary himself that character was deserving of honour, not death. *My* war and *my* revolution and *my* violence, he says in effect, are all right ; yours are all wrong.

In short, sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander. This familiar distinction is common to all egotists and to children, who are generally egotists. The underlying assumption is that their interests or opinions or principles are superior to other people's, and therefore their conduct is not to be measured by the same rule. The end justifies the means, but only *their* end and because it is theirs. The absurd thing about Socialists who unconsciously make this assumption is that they profess to stand for the opposite, for justice and equality. But the real touchstone with them is agreement or disagreement with their opinions. The Bolsheviks repeat all the old Marxian stuff about proletariat and bourgeoisie, but in practice anyone of any class who agrees with them and embraces their cause

<sup>1</sup> *The Proletarian Revolution*, p. 74.

becomes proletariat in their eyes, and anyone of any class who does not is bourgeois. That is evident, because the leaders themselves belong to the bourgeoisie, and they have shot down the proletariat who did not agree with them in heaps. Not class, but opinion, is the criterion. And so with our own Labour Party. They do not talk so much about proletariat and bourgeoisie, but they have their own equally unreal catchwords, such as 'the ruling classes' and 'the thoroughly comfortable.' Who are the ruling classes under adult suffrage? And how many prominent positions in the Labour Party are held by the 'thoroughly comfortable?' Any convert who subscribes to the faith is welcomed, regardless of class, and everyone who does not is an object of contempt, scorn and abuse, no matter what class he belongs to. He is either a knave or a fool, 'a lackey' of capitalism or a Henry Dubb. The same man, who to-day is a knave or a fool, becomes a grand fellow to-morrow if so be he embraces the faith.

Of course, their professed object is to benefit mankind at large, but all domination pleads the welfare of the dominated, who do not know what is good for them. The Germans claimed supremacy for their race and pleaded the interests of civilisation as ground for imposing their *Kultur* on the rest of the world. The Bolsheviks, in like manner, want to impose theirs in the name of civilisation. Lenin always looked forward to Bolshevising the world, as the Germans did to Germanising it. When he left Switzerland for Russia in April, 1917, he addressed a letter of farewell to the Swiss Socialists, in which he said that the great task of beginning a

whole series of revolutions had fallen to the Russian proletariat, which circumstances had made champion of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world. And his method, as I have shown, was naked force. He assumed that both object and means were right and good for the world because they were his ; anyone who held a different opinion was to be ruthlessly suppressed. It was the old story—Be my brother or I will cut your throat.

Having seized power, what did the Bolsheviks do besides suppressing those who disagreed with them? How did they set about the abolition of capitalism, and what did they put in its place? The first act, on the day following the *coup d'état*, was the issue of a decree, at the instance of Lenin, and in the name of the All-Russian Soviet Congress, abolishing the private ownership of land and transferring the administration of the land, then held by landowners, together with that of the State domains and of church lands, to agricultural committees of peasants. They expected that this would satisfy the 'land-hunger' of the peasants, who would cheerfully accept the 'socialisation' of the land and proceed to work it with joyful alacrity on communal lines. This policy, which was embodied in a Land Act in the following March, had been originally proposed by the Social Revolutionary group, who had taken the peasantry particularly under their patronage and acquired considerable influence among them. The Land Act declared 'all private ownership of land abolished for ever,' which, of course, included that of the peasant or owner-occupier. What the Bolsheviks reckoned on was that the unemployed town



proletariat, with whose aid they had achieved their revolution, would return to the country villages, from which they had originally come, and there establish the Utopian communist order contemplated by the Bolshevik theory.

The plan completely failed. The peasants welcomed Communism in so far as it meant the seizure of the land owned by other people; but, having taken it, they had no further use for Communism and stoutly resisted all attempts to impose the communal system. Even the 'village poor' were against it; what they wanted was a redistribution of the land. So rich and poor peasants alike kept the land for themselves and refused to produce for common use, not profit. When they could not get the price they expected, they limited production to their own requirements; and when armed commissaries were sent by the central oligarchy to requisition corn, the peasants met them by armed opposition. It is true that more than 500 rural Communes were set up in 1918, but many of them were quite different from the prescribed pattern, and many, being conducted by idealists, ignorant of agriculture, speedily broke down. Others became capitalist enterprises, carried on illegal trading and exploited the poorer peasantry as day-labourers.

In any case, the number of Communes set up was trifling compared with the new landowners created;<sup>1</sup> and eventually the resistance of the peasants defeated the Bolshevik land policy, which was abandoned. The great struggle took place in 1918,

<sup>1</sup> official reports published in the *Isvestia* in 1918 said that Communism was no more established by a couple of hundred co-operative cultivators among millions of peasants than by the founding of monasteries among the town and country population.

and it brought the antagonism between the Bolsheviks and Social Revolutionaries to open conflict. The latter were suppressed by force; but against the stubborn resistance of the peasants force could achieve only scattered and temporary success. The real effect of the attempt to force Communism upon them was famine, of which Lenin said in a speech delivered in the summer of 1918:

‘At this moment we have before us the root question of all human social life, the conquest over famine, or at least the mitigation of the immediate pangs of hunger, which have seized not only the two capitals but dozens of arable districts. . . The former surplus no longer exists in Russia. . . . The situation is critical. Famine does not merely threaten us, it is here.’<sup>1</sup>

The remedies he proposed were highly centralised organisation, discipline, regular work, suppression of illicit trade, premiums for production, and better order, not only among the peasants, but among the Bolshevik commissaries, who took to drink and seized corn for themselves. But the peasantry had no intention of submitting to discipline or working harder under a central authority; on the contrary they withdrew more within themselves, and in May 1919, compulsory communisation was formally abandoned.

These, then, were the results of Bolshevism on the land—violence and cruelty exercised on the landowners, who were driven out, with much destruction of property; the creation of a vast number of new owners in their place; diminished

<sup>1</sup> *Der Kampf um das Brod*, pp. 9, 23, 36, and several other passages.

production and widespread famine, which became chronic from that time on, and was only intensified by the drought of 1921. Improvement came only with free trading.

But the land policy had other effects. The abolition of the former land-ownership entailed, in effect, the dissolution of an army already demoralised; the men rushed off to their native villages to secure their share. The war could not have been continued even if the Bolsheviks had desired to do so, but they did not; they had made their bargain with Germany, and being quite defenceless by their own act, had to pay the price fixed by Germany. It was paid at Brest-Litovsk in December, and Trotsky himself was staggered by it, as he relates; but it had to be paid.

Yet the peasantry became, in a sense, the bulwark of Bolshevism against the ill-fated counter-revolutions, although they hated and resisted it. Their one thought was possession of the land, and they feared that, if the counter-revolutions succeeded, it might be taken from them again. Consequently they were on the side of the Bolsheviks in the civil war, and all the more after the inauguration of the new policy of letting them alone. This was one of the reasons for the failure of the counter-revolutionary movement; the other was the incapacity of the military leaders and officers. The first armed resistance was offered by a volunteer army organised by Tsarist generals and consisting of ex-officers and Cossacks; but the later movement emanated from the more moderate Socialists, who had been turned out by force, when they were in a majority, and were therefore better entitled

to regain power by force than the Bolsheviks had been to seize it. The practice of charging the Allies with having got up the counter-revolution has since become a commonplace of Communist argument, but Trotsky says in his defence of terrorism that the army of Koltchak was organised by Social Revolutionaries and supported by Mensheviks, that the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries of the Kuban Rada organised the army of Denikin, and that the Esthonian Mensheviks were directly concerned in the advance of Yudenitch ; and in order to leave no doubt on the subject, he repeats: 'The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries who, with the help of the troops they themselves have organised for Yudenitch, Koltchak and Denikin, are fighting for their shade of opinion in Socialism.' They appealed for help from the Allies, who gave it them because they were on the Allied side against Germany, whose tool the Bolsheviks were. The venture proved unfortunate for the reasons given, but it was perfectly legitimate. The suggestion that the Allies got up an agitation against the Bolsheviks in a peaceful and contented Russia is ludicrous ; how could they ?

So much for the peasantry and the land policy. What of the town industries ? The workmen felt themselves, in consequence of the revolution, lords of the factory as the peasants of the land ; they had been taught to expect it. In November 1917, accordingly a decree was issued establishing ' Workmen's Control.' This decree did not oust the employers, but it placed them and the conduct of the works under the control of the employed. This speedily proved unworkable. It led to conflicts

which ended in the employers and officials being kicked out by the workmen, who proceeded to run the works themselves. Since they had neither knowledge nor capital they completely failed, and the State had to step in. A policy of nationalisation was entered upon by confiscation of factories and works on the ground that the owners had failed to carry out the decree of November. It proceeded in a haphazard way not by industries but by single concerns, of which 513 had been nationalised by May 1918. The conflict between Syndicalism and State Socialism soon revealed itself, and an attempt to compromise by a system of joint control failed. To end the disorder, the Government were compelled to advance one step after another in the direction of complete nationalisation, with ever-increasing stringency of control. The Syndicalist element had to be suppressed, and it was by the usual Bolshevik methods.

In a report to the Central Executive Committee in the spring of 1918, Lenin dealt with the economic situation. He said that they found themselves in favourable conditions in that they commanded immense natural resources in ores, fuel, timber, water-power, raw chemicals, etc., and that 'the exploitation of these resources would form the basis of a hitherto unknown progress of productive forces'; but they were in a backward state on the constructive side of the revolution, through lack of technical knowledge and of discipline. It was necessary to increase production, and if they were to succeed there must be radical changes; they had either to do better than capitalism or go back to it. Already he insisted on the need for one

retrograde step—as he admitted it to be—namely, the re-engagement at high salaries of bourgeois technicians and managers, who had been expelled, as described. They must have the strictest finance and accounting, which they did not understand, but must learn; work must be more intense and more regular; they must introduce the Taylor system of scientific management and payment by results; and above all, they must submit to rigid discipline in the workshops.

‘The revolution has just struck off the oldest, strongest and heaviest fetters that bound the masses under the knout. That was yesterday, but to-day the same revolution demands, and that in the interests of Socialism, the unquestioning submission of the masses to the single will of the director of the process.’

But having been taught to expect exactly the contrary, the workmen naturally declined to adapt themselves to these conditions. It was a case of Rehoboam and the children of Israel over again. They expected more pay for less work, and relief from authority, and lo! they were told—whereas capitalism did lade you with a heavy yoke Socialism will add to your yoke. So they rebelled against Rehoboam, and had recourse to the customary methods of self-assertion, with the result that compulsion grew ever sterner and its hand heavier. Workmen who refused to obey orders or went on strike were first deprived of rations—for everything was rationed then—and on a repetition were stood up against the wall and shot out of

<sup>1</sup> *Die Nächsten Aufgaben der Sowjet-Macht*, p. 51.

hand. That was still the procedure in 1918 and long after. Lenin said that 'in proportion as administration took the place of military suppression, the court of justice would replace shooting on the spot as the typical form of suppression and compulsion,' which is sufficient evidence of the practice. The workmen were already dragooned by the Red Guards, and as nationalisation proceeded compulsion became more general and more severe. Industry was 'militarised.' In his *Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party*, Trotsky says :

'The transition to systematic, organised social labour is unthinkable without the application of compulsory measures. . . . The compulsory means at the disposal of the State is its military power. Consequently the militarisation of labour—in this or that measure, in this or that form—is an unqualified necessity for every transitional economic system, which rests on the principle of universal labour duty.'<sup>1</sup>

Of course, it was a 'transitional' stage—the stereotyped excuse for every failure and contradictory action, as though there ever was a stage that was not transitional. Anyhow, workmen were placed under far stricter control than in the war industries and deprived of all freedom of movement ; men and women in all districts were called up for work like recruits for the army, and in particular as many women as possible were taken ; soldiers demobilised were drafted into the labour army. And all of them had to obey orders like soldiers, go

<sup>1</sup> *Russische Korrespondenz*, February 1920.

where they were told, and do what they were told. Hear Trotsky again :

‘ All our most important industries are in the hands of the State. When we say to the turner Ivanoff, “ You are bound at once to work at the Sormovo factory ; if you refuse you will not receive your ration,” what are we to call it ? Economic pressure or legal compulsion ? He cannot go to another factory, for all factories are in the hands of the State, which will not allow such a change.’<sup>1</sup>

Ivanoff did not care what they called it ; by any name it was equally odious to him, though he was a very docile person. How would Bill Smith, who is by no means docile, like it ? Yet this is what the Communists want to introduce at once and the nationalisers by degrees. Of course they say that under their system there would be no such compulsion and deprivation of liberty ; but they could not avoid it. Critics have always maintained that it is inseparable from State Collectivism, and in France Syndicalism as a revolt arose out of the conviction that it is indeed so. Bolshevism has shown us both at work, first Syndicalism and then Collectivism, which followed necessarily on the breakdown of Syndicalism. It is impossible to say which proved the greater failure—the anarchy of the one or the tyranny of the other. Both experiments show that the critics were right. The Syndicalist phase proved the incapacity of the workmen to run the works ; the Collectivist phase proved the inevitability of despotic control and the abolition of liberty. Dr.

<sup>1</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 155.



Otto Bauer calls the Bolshevist industrial system a 'new and frightful despotism.' He describes it as 'an almighty State which holds the individuals in subjection in all the relations of life and allows no sphere of activity free from State interference.' It 'suppresses with the frightful weapons of terrorism all opposition and all criticism.' And this despotism was exercised by a tiny minority of persons. Lenin himself declared that when the Communist Party was purged of the unworthy elements who had sneaked in, it numbered only from 100,000 to 200,000 genuine members.<sup>1</sup>

It was done by putting everything in control of these select persons, who occupied all the authoritative posts in all departments and could be trusted to carry out the orders of the little inner oligarchy, who decided everything. They formed a bureaucracy constantly increasing in size. The Bolsheviki on seizing power at once dismissed the old Tsarist State officials and set up a bureaucracy of their own, just as they disbanded the army to create a new one, and emptied the gaols of criminals in order to fill them up with their political opponents. Trotsky calls the new bureaucracy the 'organised workers,' who 'occupy a controlling position in all spheres of Soviet construction.'<sup>2</sup> How they can still be workers, when they have become controllers, is not explained; there is a slight inconsistency here with the Marxian theory, which sharply divides the two. Among the things they controlled were the trade unions, which had been reconstituted, too, as organs of the bureaucracy. On this point again Trotsky

<sup>1</sup> *Die Kommunistischen Samstage, Russische Korrespondenz*, No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Terrorism and Communism*, p. 140

enlightens us. He speaks of the 'new discipline of new, productional trade unions,' and goes on to admit that they were not trade unions in the ordinary sense.

'When the Menshevik Rubtzov said that there remained only the fragment of the trade union movement in my report, there was a certain amount of truth in it. Of the trade unions as he' (and every one else) 'understands them—that is to say, trade unions of the old craft type—there has in reality remained very little.'

Trotsky emphasises again and again the completeness and the necessity of compulsory labour; that principle, he says, 'has just as radically and permanently replaced the principle of free hiring as the socialisation of the means of production has replaced capitalist property.' And again:

'If organised economic life is unthinkable without compulsory labour service, the latter is not to be realised without the abolition of the fiction of the freedom of labour, and without the substitution for it of the obligatory principle, which is supplemented by real compulsion.'

After these admissions there can be no question that the unhappy proletariat had actually much less freedom under Bolshevism than they had before. And yet Trotsky expected this system to develop personal initiative in the worker, which he considered highly necessary.<sup>1</sup> He says this in defence of the one-man principle of control as against the principle of boards or committees. Here is a remarkable contrast well worth the attention of

<sup>1</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 156.    <sup>2</sup> *Terrorism*, pp. 126, 131.    <sup>3</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 153.

politicians, economists, employers and working-men. The extreme subjection of the rank and file is equalled by the freedom allowed to the individual head. He will not hear of boards, and calls them nonsense.

‘No board of persons who do not know the given business can replace one man who knows it. A board in itself does not give knowledge to the ignorant. It can only hide the ignorance of the ignorant. . . . There is nothing worse than a board of ignorant, badly-prepared workers appointed to a purely practical post, demanding expert knowledge.’<sup>1</sup>

The expert, who does know, must be free from any such incumbrance.

‘It is necessary to allow the expert freedom to act, freedom to create ; because no expert, be he ever so little gifted or capable, can work in his department when subordinate in his own technical work to a board of men who do not know that department.’<sup>2</sup>

It is something that the Bolsheviks have discovered by experience what Marx never did ; and that is the creative mind in industry and its need of free working. But their conception of the creative mind and of freedom was still somewhat imperfect, when Trotsky laid down the foregoing proposition. They were to ‘bring under control all the technical experts they possessed and introduce in practice for them the principle of compulsory labour, at the same time leaving them a wide margin of activity,

<sup>1</sup> *Terrorism*, pp. 151-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 110.

and maintaining over them careful political control.' They evidently had still much to learn about industry. The most important function in the successful conduct of industry is not that of the technical expert, but of the general organising and administrative mind, which co-ordinates all the elements, plans and directs the working of the concern as a whole. And it is not compatible with the principle of compulsion or 'careful political control,' which can only mean interference on political grounds. Political control can have nothing to do with industry and must hamper it. There is a corresponding contradiction in the idea of combining the complete subjection of the rank and file with the development of initiative in them. If the Bolsheviks had studied Marx less and mankind more they would not have made such a frightful mess of Russia; but then they would not be Bolsheviks.

A tree is known by its fruits. What were the results of this great economic experiment? A concise and conclusive answer is furnished by Lenin's own admission in a speech delivered at a conference of Political Educators in October 1921, and by the new economic policy, the necessity for which it explained. This speech was published in the official journal *Isvestia*, and re-published in an English translation by the Independent Labour Party. The gist of it is that the Bolsheviks had tried to go too fast and had committed serious errors which entailed a severe economic defeat, necessitating a strategic retreat and a new economic policy, which was a partial return to capitalism. Lenin was very outspoken, after his wont. He said

that in 1918 they had committed an error in deciding to make an immediate transition to Communist production and distribution, instead of proceeding gradually through a long period of Socialist control and regulation. He excused the error on the ground of the Czecho-Slovak rising and the civil war ; but the dates given above show that the error was committed long before those events, in fact from the very outset of their rule. The land policy, which was initiated on the day after the *coup d'état*, rested on the belief that the peasants would acquiesce in a communal administration and 'hand over their grain under a requisition system ; this corn would then be distributed to factories and workshops, and we should thus arrive at a Communist system of production and distribution.' 'Unfortunately,' he goes on,

'Experience, a very short experience too, showed the error of this conception. . . . During this period, as the result of this error, we underwent a severe economic defeat, after which we began a strategic retreat ; although we were not absolutely beaten, we could only retire to reconstruct the whole in a more solid fashion.'

He refers presumably to the abandonment of force against the peasantry and the change to the policy of trying to win them over. But matters had gone too far and reconstruction—such as it was—failed again.

'The attempt to introduce Communism cost us, in the spring of 1921, a defeat on the economic front far more serious than any we had previously

sustained at the hands of Koltchak, Denikin or Pilsudsky. At this period our economic policy, as conceived by the authorities, did not in the least correspond with what was going on among the masses, and was not even able to restore production. Any such restoration was prevented by requisition in the villages and, in the towns, by the immediate introduction of Communist methods. It is this policy which provoked the profound crisis, economic and political, which broke out in the spring of 1921. Here, from the standpoint of our general policy, is a defeat, a serious defeat and a retreat, nor can we say, as of the Red Army, that it was a retreat in perfect order to positions prepared in advance.'

The retreat was a return to capitalism.

'The new economic policy, represented by the substitution of a tax in kind for requisitioning, marks the transition to the re-establishment of capitalism to a certain degree. To what degree we do not know. Concessions to foreign capitalists—of which very few have been actually carried through in proportion to our offers—like the guarantees to private capitalists—are *nothing more nor less than the direct re-establishment of capitalism, and that is radically bound up with our new economic policy.*'

This entailed an economic war between Bolshevism and capitalism, inside Bolshevik Russia, and the question was which would come out on top; for the Bolsheviks had not abandoned their ultimate aims but had retreated only to spring again.

‘ The question is, who will get in first ? If the capitalists are the first to get organised, they will drive out the Communists—there is no need to mince words about that—one must face the issue.’

Words and phrases, he continues, are no good.

‘ Our only support can be in the minds of the workers and peasants. It is there that reside the greatest difficulties of our struggle. We cannot count on any immediate transition to Bolshevism. We must build on the personal interest of the peasant . . . the real difficulty is in reviving personal interest. Every specialist must be so interested that the development of production concerns him. Have we done that ? No, we have failed. We thought that production and distribution would go on according to Communist rules in a country where the proletariat is declassed. We must change our method. . . . Our frontal attack has failed ; we have been defeated ; we must sit down and begin sapping and mining. The entire national economy must be based on personal interest. Discussion must go on in common, but responsibility must be personal. . . . Most of our congresses have ended in nothing but words. Have meetings, if you like, but direct without the smallest hesitation, direct more firmly than the capitalist ever did. Otherwise you will never beat him. Direction must be more severe, more rigid than before. In the Red Army, after months of meetings, discipline was as severe as under the old régime. Penalties were adopted, including that of death, unknown even to the old government.’

An instructive admission, which applies to the militarised industry as well as to the army, and gives the whole case for Socialism away. A passage which appeared in the original publication, but was afterwards excised by the censor, has been restored in the I.L.P. translation. It shows Lenin at his best.

‘ If we work badly now, we shall all go to the devil. They will hang the lot of us and will do well. They ought to hang us if we fail.’

He concludes by naming the three great internal enemies of Communism—1, brag ; 2, ignorance ; 3, venality.

‘ Communist brag means that a person, being a member of the Communist Party, and not having yet been put out of it, imagines that he can solve all problems by Communistic decree.’

Which is exactly what they all thought, and not only they, but all Socialists in varying degree. They all imagine they can change men and things in the way they desire by changing the system, that is, by decree.

This speech of Lenin's is truly an illuminating utterance, not only as a confession of economic failure, but far more as a recognition of principles which are the negation of Bolshevism. He not only admits the necessity of re-introducing capitalism, as a practical measure of expediency, but recognises and emphasises the principle of individualism—which Bolshevism is intended to suppress—as an essential element in successful economic activity. It is to be their chief weapon



against capitalism. He has been driven to that by the logic of facts, but he still does not perceive the significance of his admission. He tries, like Trotsky, to combine the contrary principles of authority and liberty by carrying both to extremes. It is impossible to imagine a more hopeless state of mental confusion or a more complete illustration of the blindness caused by an *idée fixe* derived from abstract theory and applied to practical affairs. Liberty and authority can be reconciled, but not in their extreme forms.

Lenin's confession is in itself ample evidence of the failure of the Bolshevist economic system, but it may be substantiated by some details. In a book entitled *The Economic Condition of Russia*, published in English last autumn, Mr. S. N. Prokopovich, formerly Professor of Economics in Moscow, gives statistics, derived mainly from official publications. The area of land under cultivation in successive years is shown in the following table :

1913 .....	87.4	million dessiatines
1916 .....	79.2	„
1920 .....	62.3	„
1921 .....	54.9	„
1922 .....	49.2	„

There was a drop during the war, but a far greater one after the revolution, and it continued progressively under Bolshevist rule after the civil wars were over. The productivity of the factories, which had risen during the war from 100 per cent. (1913) to 127.5 per cent. in 1916, fell afterwards rapidly year by year to about 30 per cent. According to the Soviet Commissary of Labour, the output

in even the most efficient enterprises at the end of 1920 did not exceed 20 per cent. of the pre-war standard. The percentage of lost time in the second four months of 1922, which is the latest period covered, was 45.9, and in addition productivity in the time worked had fallen to 55 or 60 per cent. of the pre-war standard. In a speech delivered at the All-Russian Congress in December 1921, and reported verbatim in the *Pravda*, Kameneff confirmed these facts. He said that 'the peasantry answered our policy by limiting their cultivation to the needs of their own consumption,' and that, as to industry, 'we found by the spring of 1921 that the productivity of our industry fell to 20 per cent. of the pre-war level.'

All the evidence goes to show that since the Bolshevik Revolution there has never been enough food to feed the population; what there was has gone to the Red Army and the swollen Communist bureaucracy. It was the growing discontent from this cause at the beginning of 1921—many months before the drought and the failure of the harvest—that forced Lenin to adopt the new economic policy. He was alarmed in particular by a mutiny of sailors at Cronstadt and serious bread riots in Petrograd.

It is extremely difficult to say what effect the new economic policy, introduced during 1921, really had, because the official accounts differ. There have been many changes of policy, and Russian statistics 'could not be worse,' as the President of the Supreme Economic Council said in June 1924. A great deal of detailed information about the conditions of labour, wages, disputes, trade unionism, unemployment, insurance, etc.—all

drawn from official reports—was published by the International Labour Office in 1924, from which it appears that in regard to these matters the change effected was very great. Compulsory labour was in general abolished in favour of hiring, and the trade unions, which had become State bodies, as described, reverted in a large measure to their former functions. One result was a great fall in membership. They had increased from under one million in 1917 to  $8\frac{1}{2}$  millions in 1921, which meant that all sorts of people joined them to secure the benefits of their bureaucratic functions. After the introduction of the new policy they fell off again to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions in 1923. A minimum wage rate was fixed by the State, but served only as a basis for the actual wages, which were settled by collective agreement. A rise in wages followed, mainly in the small industries, which were run by private enterprise; the large industries, which were still nationalised, could not pay so much, partly because of their hopeless inefficiency and heavy costs, partly because of the financial chaos and insolvency of the State.

In 1923 wages fell again, and unemployment increased rapidly. In 1924 wages were often several weeks and months in arrears in the nationalised industries, in spite of all efforts to reduce costs by cutting down the swollen bureaucratic staffs. In October of that year the arrears amounted to £1,419,700. The trade unions took an ever-diminishing share in management, and confined their attention to collective agreements and disputes. They came to play only an advisory part in the appointment of directors, and ceased to take

any interest in that. There was some improvement in productivity, but chiefly in the small (capitalist) enterprises; in the State industries there was little or none, and 'increased productivity' became the official cry in 1924. In August of that year Kameneff declared that 'there could be no further increase in wages without a corresponding increase of productivity,' and the Central Committee of the Communist Party passed a resolution stating that wages had increased 90 per cent. since 1922, but production only 23.3 per cent. They called this a 'menace to the interests of industry and of the State,' and continued:

'The development of industry and the stabilisation of wages can be obtained only by increasing the individual output of labour. The present situation is resulting in an increase of unemployment, ever increasing delays in the payment of social insurance contributions by industry, almost insurmountable difficulties in the payment of wages in the metal industry, the coal-mines and the petroleum wells, and a shortage of capital which is preventing all development of production and the possibility of satisfying all the needs of the agricultural population.'

Mr. Michael Farbman, who gave an account of present conditions to the I.L.P. summer school last August, said that 'economic retreat was not at an end, although every fresh step was taken with reluctance. Nor was conflict between town and country ended.' Productivity in industries Mr. Farbman placed at 50 per cent. of the pre-war

<sup>1</sup> *Economicheskaja Zhizna*. September 5, 1924.

standard, which hardly indicates much improvement on the earlier figures given, when lost time is taken into account. Last year there were 381 strikes in State factories, and 195 in privately-owned ones. The unemployed in April 1924, numbered 1,350,000, which is a far higher proportional rate than even our own. The causes were the closure of unremunerative factories and the attraction of peasants to the cities. The skilled unemployed received a dole of 50 per cent., and the unskilled 33 per cent. of subsistence allowance.

Not a very exhilarating or hopeful account after seven years' trial. Clearly the Bolsheviks are being forced reluctantly but inexorably to abandon step by step an economic system which experience has proved impossible. Yet they still cling to the dream of getting other nations to adopt it or of forcing it on them. With what object? Only to carry out their *idée fixe*, from which they seem unable to free themselves, now that Lenin, who might have done so, is dead. The only other possible object is to reduce the rest of the world to a state of equal wretchedness. And there are persons in other countries obsessed with the same delusions and eager to gratify them. But they are few and getting fewer. The hideous object lesson presented by Bolshevism has not been lost on the world at large, which has no desire to plunge into misery because Marx talked rabid nonsense three quarters of a century ago. It was nonsense then; it is far greater nonsense now, when the conditions, which once lent it a specious appearance, have radically changed. The Bolsheviks have put it to the test themselves and proved it to be nonsense.

That is why I have dwelt at length on the economic results, and have passed over the other aspects of this ghastly drama. Socialism of every kind is essentially concerned with economic conditions ; it aims at an economic reconstruction of society, and the improvement of all human conditions thereby. The economic results are, therefore, the test of failure or success. They are the end, to which the other features of Bolshevism are the means. But the two cannot be separated ; they are parts of the same story. And what a story it is ! Was it worth while to wade through rivers of blood—the ‘extremely bloody character of the revolution’ which was denounced by Kautsky is frankly admitted by Trotsky<sup>1</sup>—to suffer the horrors of Terrorism, denied by the *Daily Herald*, but admitted and defended by Lenin and Trotsky, to undergo the militarisation of labour, and much more—was it worth while to carry out such a monstrous programme for such a pitiful result—Russia broken, bankrupt, starving, helpless, coming cap in hand to Capitalism for help ? No one who is not mentally deranged can pretend that it was. If it had been crowned with success it might be contended that the end justified the means. But when the result is utter failure that cannot be pleaded.

There is no country to-day in such a wretched state as Bolshevist Russia ; and the cause is none other than Bolshevism itself. I have quoted Lenin on the favourable conditions and vast resources of Russia in 1918. The civil war, though itself the inevitable product of Bolshevism as Lenin always insisted, might serve to excuse the failure to make

<sup>1</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 61.

use of them ; but that cannot be said of the later period. Writing in 1920 Trotsky said, ' The Soviet Government disposed of such resources and methods for economic reconstruction as no other government ever had or has to-day.' What has become of them? The utter failure to realise them since cannot be attributed to the malign action of anybody, because no one has interfered, and other countries have resumed such commercial relations with Russia as the Bolshevik system permits. The failure can be attributed to nothing but the Bolshevik system itself, in spite of its modification by the new economic policy.

It is not surprising that its stock has fallen heavily in the world outside Russia, and that other Socialists in particular angrily repudiate it, because it discredits Socialism in general. The very groups formed in other countries to support it and tied to the various international organisations established by the Moscow oligarchy—and run by them—to extend their sway over the world, have not been insensible to the failure and are dwindling rapidly according to the following figures extracted by *Justice* from Soviet papers. They give the strength of the Communist Parties in the nine principal countries of Europe for 1920, 1922 and 1924.

	1920	1922	1924
Belgium .. ..	1,000	517	590
Denmark .. ..	1,200	1,200	700
England .. ..	10,000	5,116	3,000
France .. ..	130,000	78,828	50,000
Germany .. ..	360,000	266,000	350,000
Italy .. ..	70,000	24,638	12,000
Norway .. ..	97,000	48,000	16,000
Sweden .. ..	15,000	12,143	12,000
Czechoslovakia ..	360,000	170,000	130,000
Total ..	1,044,200	606,442	574,290

It will be noticed that the figures for Germany, unlike the rest, show a large fall in 1922 followed by a recovery in 1924 to nearly the height of 1920. The explanation suggested in *Justice* is subsidies from Moscow, without which 'the organisation would probably dwindle rapidly.' It is also said that there has been a considerable decline in membership during the last few months. Here is a reason for the British loan. Without Germany the totals are—1920, 684,000; 1922, 340,442; 1924, 224,290. Mr. Newbold, the late Communist M.P. for Motherwell, seems to be right; the tide is falling, not rising. Yet the Bolsheviks have in no wise relinquished their scheme of world conquest; and their chief aim in the recent negotiations with the Labour Government was to get means for carrying it on.

A word about their political system which they call 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' This ridiculous and self-contradictory expression was invented by Marx in 1875, and expressed in a letter criticising the Gotha programme of the German Social-Democratic Party. Dictatorship was an emergency office in ancient Rome, only resorted to in time of great national danger and for a limited period. It placed absolute power for the time being in the hands of a single man who was above all law and could do what he pleased. The proletariat are the wage-earners, who in most countries form the mass of the people, and run to several millions even in Russia. The conception of a dictatorship, the essence of which is the supreme authority of a single will being exercised by the mass of the people, who never can or do agree about



anything, is obviously absurd. There truly is a dictatorship in Russia, a single will above all law ; but the proletariat have very little to do with it. Nor was it set up by a constitutional act and for a limited period, as in ancient Rome. It was established by an act of force and for as long as the holder chose. While he lived Lenin was the holder ; since his death the supreme authority has been in commission. ' We know,' said Zinovieff the other day, ' that we are the real rulers in Moscow.' He is one of the committee. But they have not the single will required for a real dictatorship, because they by no means agree, and that is a source of weakness. As for the proletariat, they only come in as that body of functionaries mentioned above, who can be trusted to carry out orders. The rest are under the Terror. The rulers themselves do not belong to the proletariat, and the Soviet system of representative government is a travesty of democracy by reason of the gerrymandering electoral system, and the constant pressure of the Terror.

Surely the irony of history presents no such spectacle of promises, pretensions and expectations realised in the opposite sense as Bolshevism. Instead of peace, civil war ; instead of plenty, starvation ; instead of political liberty, despotism upheld by the Terror ; instead of industrial liberty, a ' rigid, iron discipline ' ; instead of liberty of conscience, religious persecution ; instead of free speech, suppression. These things have waxed and waned at different times, but they are the standing marks of Bolshevism, which was to introduce the millennium.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NEW INTERNATIONALS

THE Second International, fully described in Chapter vi. of Part I., fell to pieces at the outbreak of war. The partial and informal anti-war meetings held in 1915 and 1916 at Zimmerwald and Kienthal, and referred to in the last chapter, were nominally intended to carry it on or put it together again, but they really started a new and antagonistic movement, under the influence of Lenin, as already indicated.

This new movement created a standing organ of its own, called the Zimmerwald Commission, which gradually came under the sway of the extreme revolutionary Left Wing of Socialism. There had always been a Left Wing, as I have repeatedly shown. In fact, no Socialist organisation, except a few purely intellectual societies, has ever been formed which did not sooner or later divide more or less decisively into Right and Left Wings, with sundry intermediate grades; and the division has frequently developed into a complete split, with the secession or expulsion of one side. The collapse of the First International was consummated in this way, and the foundations of the Second were laid in similar stormy conditions, although both the leaders in the old quarrel had been dead for years. Internal dissension seems to be inherent in the very nature of Socialism, and inseparable

from it. The fact is illuminating. Nothing reveals more clearly the imperishable element of Individualism than its marked assertion in the very movement which is nominally its negation, and intended to suppress it. Socialists are always striving for unity, but no set of people are less successful; the more they strive the less they succeed, because the idea of unity entertained by each opposing group is the domination of its own views. It was not until the expulsion of the Left Wing in 1893 that the Second International assumed an appearance of unity, and then it soon developed fresh antagonisms. In the present phase the old tendency has been accentuated, and has resulted in the creation once more of two rival Internationals. This is one of the principal results of the impetus given to the movement by the war.

It is not necessary to follow in detail the obscure and confused proceedings that led up to this consummation, during and immediately after the war; a brief outline will suffice.

The 'defeatist' movement, begun at the meetings of 1915 and 1916 in Switzerland, was continued in 1917 by a third congress at Stockholm, under the combined auspices of the German Government and the pacific Socialists. Both the Bureau of the old International and the Zimmerwald Commission had a hand in it, but the influence of the latter predominated. It was held in September—that is to say, after the first Russian Revolution—and a few weeks before the *coup d'état* of the Bolsheviks, who were then completing their preparations. It was not a real international congress, as only certain groups of Socialists were represented,

and the Allied countries were not represented at all. The hand of Germany was so plainly visible in the arrangements that delegates would probably have been refused passports, but that question did not arise. On account of differences of opinion it was decided that a preliminary condition must be the acceptance of an agreed policy to be maintained at Stockholm, and since it was found impossible to formulate such a policy the project fell through. In any case the highly patriotic Seamen's Union here proclaimed their intention of refusing to carry any British delegates. The meeting, which had been planned to bring in the Allied countries, was consequently a failure. It adopted a manifesto declaring for peace and international proletarian revolution, which showed the growing Russian influence.

In 1918 the Russian Bolsheviki, who had achieved their own revolution, were fully occupied with internal affairs, but a move was made by the Inter-Allied Socialists which led to a conference held at Berne in February 1919. This was, in effect, a Right Wing demonstration against the Zimmerwald revolutionary tendency, though it was more immediately concerned with the peace conference at Versailles and the responsibility for war, which, by the way, was then inferentially placed by the German Socialists on the old Hohenzollern régime. There was little difficulty in agreeing upon these outside subjects, but when the conference came to discuss Bolshevism, which raised questions peculiar to Socialism, involving its aims and methods, the inevitable division appeared. The majority, which included the Russian (Menshevist) delegates, condemned the dictatorship idea of Bolshevism, and

insisted on democratic methods; the minority objected, threw doubt on the information given by the Menshevist Russian delegates, and urged a sympathetic suspension of judgment. We will return later to the subsequent proceedings of these parties.

Meanwhile the Bolsheviks in Moscow, seeing that international Socialism was not going their way, had resolved to anticipate any opposing movement, and had sent out an invitation to a congress for the purpose of forming a Communist International. They were obviously in a great hurry. The invitation went out in January, and the congress was to be held at the beginning of March, although it was impossible in the disturbed state of international affairs for many to make arrangements to go to Moscow at such short notice, more especially as no trouble was taken to ensure the receipt of the invitation by those to whom it was addressed. Many did not, in fact, get it until after the congress was over, and the Communist International started. The thing was plainly rushed, no doubt in view of the Berne conference. The Bolsheviks meant to have first innings, and they got it. The invitation, signed by Lenin and Trotsky, and addressed to Left Wing groups and organisations, condemned the views represented by the Berne conference (before it had been held), and proposed the immediate and universal adoption of the Bolshevik policy—seizure of power by force, dictatorship of the proletariat, and suppression of the bourgeoisie, etc. In short, the other countries were to do as the Russians had done, and the fundamental principle of the new International was ‘to

subordinate the interests of the movement in each country to the general interests of the international revolution.'

The congress was held on March 2nd to 6th, and the Third International set up. Groups, for the most part very small, in thirty-four countries were nominally represented or declared to be affiliated. The Zimmerwald Commission was formally dissolved and merged in the new organisation, which shows the connection. A manifesto with a programme was presented and adopted, bearing the names of Lenin, Trotsky, Zinovieff, Rakovsky and Platten; it is interesting as a revelation of Bolshevik mentality. It began by declaring that the assembled members felt themselves to be the fulfillers of the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, and went on to denounce everyone else in the usual strain. Much of it was devoted to the war, and among other things it informed the world that Great Britain was the real culprit. 'London wanted war,' and the indecisive attitude of British diplomacy on the question of taking part in it was deliberately adopted 'so as not to alarm the Berlin Government and put off the war.' This is very ingenious, but it reveals a capacity for misreading events and misunderstanding other countries which fully explains the long series of disappointments. the Bolsheviks prepared for themselves. Nor was that all. 'The war, which had been prepared for decades,' the manifesto went on, 'broke out through the direct and conscious provocation of Great Britain. The British Government reckoned on giving support to France and Russia until they were exhausted and at the same time had crushed

Germany, their mortal enemy.' It is impossible to feel any respect for the intelligence of men who could either utter or swallow such nonsense. As Voltaire said of the prophet Habakkuk, they are capable of anything.

The whole document is full of absurdities. It finds a complete solution of the question of increasing misery, which has been discussed in previous chapters, in the 'harrowing reality of impoverishment' caused by the war. This is 'no longer merely a social problem, but a physiological and biological one.' The argument appears to be that the theory of increasing misery was triumphantly vindicated by the effects of war, with which, however, the theory has nothing to do. The theory presupposes peace as an essential condition for the economic working of Capitalism, which is to cause increasing misery through its own inherent character. War is an interruption, not a fulfilment, of the process. And what of the much greater misery caused by their own civil war and the economic system which, two years later, they were to give up as a confessed failure, and modify by a partial return to Capitalism? They denounce war because of its horrors, but civil war, which Lenin has admitted to be still more destructive, is not to be judged by any such rule, at least when they wage it. 'The outcry of the bourgeois world against civil war and the Red Terror is the most colossal hypocrisy of which the history of political struggles can boast.' Why? Because 'civil war is forced upon the labouring classes by their arch-enemies,' which is no doubt the reason why it has taken bourgeois agitators, 'who do not belong to the

labouring classes, three-quarters of a century to work it up. This notion of the class war being really waged by the bourgeoisie, not by the proletariat, who only defend themselves, is one of the latest tricks of controversy picked up by our own Bolsheviks. It is entirely at variance with the theory of Marx, who invented the doctrine, and with the interpretation given by Trotsky, who says, 'The real teaching of Marx is the theoretical formula of action, of attack, of the development of revolutionary energy, and of the carrying of the class-blow to its logical conclusion.'<sup>1</sup>

After dealing with these matters, the manifesto announced the character and purpose of the Third International in the following terms:

'Spurning the half-heartedness, hypocrisy and corruption of the decadent official Socialist Parties, we, the Communists assembled in the Third International, feel ourselves to be the direct successors of the heroic efforts and martyrdoms of a long series of revolutionary generations, from Babœuf to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. As the First International saw the future development and pointed the war; as the Second International gathered together and organised millions of the proletarians; so the Third International is the International of open main action, of the revolutionary realisation—the International of Deeds.'

This was followed by the programme, which was characteristically verbose and windy. The salient points were these:

<sup>1</sup> *Terrorism*, p. 164.



(1) POLITICAL.—Conquest of political power by the proletariat, which

‘ Means not merely a change in the personnel of ministries, but annihilation of the enemy’s machinery of government ; disarmament of the bourgeoisie, of the counter-revolutionary officers, of the White Guard ; arming of the proletariat, the revolutionary soldiers, the Red Guard of working men ; displacement of all bourgeois judges and organisation of all proletarian courts ; diminution of control by reactionary Government officials and substitution of new organs of management of the proletariat. . . . ’

(2) ECONOMIC.—Expropriation of the bourgeoisie and socialisation of industry.

‘ In order to raise the standards of productivity . . . the Proletarian Dictatorship must carry out the expropriation of the greater bourgeoisie and junkerdom and convert the means of production and distribution into the common property of the Proletarian State.

‘ The Dictatorship of the Proletariat does not in any way call for partition of the means of production and exchange ; rather, on the contrary, its aim is further to centralise the forces of production and to subject all production to a systematic plan. As the first steps Socialisation of the great banks which now control production ; the taking over by the power of the proletariat of all Government-controlled economic utilities ; the transferring of all communal enterprises ; the Socialising of the

syndicated and trustified units of production, as well as all other branches of production in which the degree of concentration and centralisation of capital makes this technically practicable; the Socialising of agricultural estates and their conversion into co-operative establishments. . . .

‘ Small properties will in no way be expropriated and property owners who are not exploiters of labour will not be forcibly dispossessed. This element will be gradually drawn into the Socialist organisation through the force of example, through practical demonstration of the superiority of the new order of things. . . .

‘ In the field of distribution the Proletarian Dictatorship must re-establish Commerce by an accurate distribution of products; to which end the following methods are to be considered: the Socialisation of wholesale establishments, the taking over of all bourgeois State and municipal apparatus of distribution; control of the great co-operative societies; the gradual centralisation of all these organisations, and their conversion into a systematic unity for the rational distribution of products.

‘ Besides expropriating the factories, mines, estates, etc., the proletariat must also abolish the exploitation of the people by capitalist landlords, transfer the large mansions to the local workers’ Soviets, and move the working people into bourgeois dwellings.

‘ During this great transition period the power of the Soviets must constantly build up the entire administrative organisation into a more centralised structure; but, on the other hand,

constantly draw ever-increasing elements of the working people into the immediate control of the Government.'

### (3) THE METHODS OF FORCE.

'The revolutionary era compels the proletariat to make use of the means of battle which will concentrate its entire energies, namely mass action, with its logical resultant, direct conflict with the Governmental machinery in open combat. All other methods, such as revolutionary use of bourgeois parliamentarism, will be of only secondary significance.

'The growth of the revolutionary movement in all lands, the danger of suppression of this revolution through the coalition of capitalist States, the attempts of the Socialist betrayers to unite with one another and give their services to the Wilsonian League (League of Nations); finally, the absolute necessity of co-ordination of proletarian action—all these demand the formation of a real revolutionary and real proletarian Communist International. This international, which subordinates the so-called national interests to the interests of the international revolution, will personify the mutual help of the proletariat of the different countries. . . . The Proletarian Communist International will support the plundered colonial peoples in their fight against Imperialism, in order to hasten the final collapse of the imperialistic world system.'

In short, all the other nations were to follow the example of Russia and do exactly what the Bolsheviks had done there, involving universal civil war and terrorism. To what end? Universal destruction, misery and starvation, as in Russia, simply in order that the words of the prophet Marx might be fulfilled. If they were not so supremely self-satisfied and self-confident, so scornful and merciless towards everyone who does not agree with them, one might almost pity these men for their profound ignorance and blind infatuation. Contrast their expectations and the fulfilment. They are going to 'raise the standards of productivity' and 're-establish commerce' by their own system. They actually reduced productivity to 20 per cent. of the old capitalist standard, according to Kameneff's own admission in December 1921; they brought millions to death by starvation, and would have brought many more but for the bourgeois charity of capitalist countries; and to re-establish commerce they come cap in hand to bourgeois capitalists for assistance, without which they declare themselves economically helpless. Nor is there any excuse for their failure, for the one thing they did succeed in was the conquest of political power by force. They could do, and did, exactly what they pleased; the wretched plight to which they are reduced to-day is due to nothing whatever but an insane economic system built on the antiquated fallacies of Marx.

And if other countries followed their example, which is the aim and object of the Third International, most of them would be in a far worse case. In this island, for instance, the civil war would not

last long, because all alike would be starving within a month or two. And there would be no relief, because there would be no country left to go to, cap in hand, for assistance. If the world has ever known a more insane project, it has not been recorded in history.

Yet the Russian Bolsheviks seriously entertained it, and attracted a certain number of flies to walk into their pretty little parlour, called the Third International. At the second congress, held in August 1920, they were more confident than ever. They boasted that the Communist International had become the fashion, and things really seemed to be going their way. At home the Red Army had successfully defeated the incompetent counter-revolutionary forces, and the failure of the Bolshevik economic policy was not yet sufficiently apparent to undermine their confidence in it. Abroad, the revolutionary ferment, which followed the war, was still rising, and anything seemed possible. In Germany Soviets had been formed all over the country, there had been Spartacist risings, and the Reichstag elections revealed a growing movement towards the Left. In Austria there was a similar tendency, and in Hungary a Bolshevik Ministry had actually been installed. In Italy Communism had always been strong, and was becoming more active. In Great Britain the Labour-Socialist movement had been greatly stimulated, and was becoming more and more ambitious, with a strong leaning towards Bolshevism, which took the form of establishing 'councils of action' in August 1920. Earlier in the year a Labour deputation visited Russia, where the authorities contrived to persuade

most of the members that Bolshevism was highly successful, though two or three declined to be hood-winked, and produced a very unfavourable report.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that the second Congress met in a very confident mood. Thirty-five countries were represented, including Persia, India, China, Korea and Mexico. The president was Zinovieff, who opened the proceedings, and the manifesto issued by the congress was signed, for Russia, by Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin and Zinovieff. The English signatories were Quelch, Gallacher, Pankhurst and MacLaine. The manifesto reviewed the existing conditions in different countries in the light of Bolshevism, but otherwise contained nothing new. It is, however, worth noting in view of the signatories, that the Communist International formally recognised all means towards its revolutionary end, and expressly mentioned trade organisations, economic and political insurrections, boycotting, parliamentary and municipal elections, proceedings in Parliament, legal and illegal agitation, secret propaganda in the army, co-operative labour, barricades. The principal business of the congress was the presentation and adoption of the statutes, from which I extract the chief points in a condensed form :

AIM.—‘ To fight, with every means, even with weapons in hand, for the overthrow of the international bourgeois and creation of an international Soviet Republic as a transitional step to the complete destruction of the State.’

BOLSHEVISM.—‘ The C.I. upholds fully and completely the conquests of the great proletarian

revolution in Russia, and summons the proletariat of the whole world to tread the same path.'

ORGANISATION.—'The C.I. is aware that in order to achieve victory more speedily the Workmen's Association' (i.e. the International itself) 'must possess a closely centralised organisation. The C.I. must actually and in fact present a united Communist Party of the whole world.'

'To this end the C.I. affirms the following points of the statute :

(1) 'The new International Workmen's Association has been created to organise the common action of the proletarians of the several countries who strive for the one goal—namely, the overthrow of Capitalism, establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and of an international Soviet Republic for the complete elimination of classes and the realisation of Socialism.'

(2) 'The new International calls itself Communist International.'<sup>1</sup>

(3) 'All parties affiliated to the C.I. bear the name Communist Party of such-and-such a country.'

(4) 'The supreme authority of the C.I. is the World Congress of affiliated parties and organisations. The World Congress meets annually. The World Congress is alone empowered to alter the programme of the C.I.'

(5) 'The World Congress elects the Executive Committee, which is the directing organ of the C.I. in the inter-congress periods. The Executive

<sup>1</sup> Later the portmanteau word 'Comintern' was coined, and has since been officially used.

Committee is responsible only to the World Congress.'

(6) 'The seat of the Executive Committee will be determined from time to time by the Congress.'

(7) 'An Extraordinary Congress may be summoned either by a decision of the Executive Committee or at the request of half the affiliated parties.'

(8) 'The work of the Executive Committee falls mainly on the party of the country where the seat is. This party has five representatives with the right to vote on the Committee. In addition, the ten most important parties on the list have each one representative with a vote. The other affiliated parties have the right to one consulting delegate.'

(9) 'The Executive Committee conducts all the business of the International from one Congress to another, publishes in at least four languages the central mouthpiece of the International (the journal *Communist International*), issues the necessary summonses in the name of the C.I., and gives all affiliated parties binding directions. The Executive Committee has the right to demand the expulsion of groups and parties which violate international discipline, and also to exclude those parties which disregard the decisions of the Congress. Such parties may appeal to the Congress. If necessary, the Executive Committee organises in the different countries its own technical and other offices, which are completely under its authority.'

(10) and (11) are unimportant.



(12) 'The general situation throughout Europe and America forces the Communists of the whole world to create illegal Communist organisations alongside of the legal ones. The Executive Committee is bound to take care that this is everywhere carried out in practice.'

(13) 'As a rule political communication between the affiliated parties is carried on through the Executive Committee. In urgent cases it may be direct, but the Executive Committee must be simultaneously kept informed.'

(14) 'The trade unions which accept the principle of Communism, and are associated on an international scale under the direction of the C.I., form a trade union section of the C.I. These unions delegate their representatives to the World Congress through the Communist Parties of their respective countries. The trade union section has the right to one representative with voting power on the Executive Committee. The latter has the corresponding right to a representative in the trade union section.'

(15) 'The Communist Youth International is, as a branch of the C.I., subject to it and to the Executive Committee, like all other branches. It has the same right of representation as the trade union section.'

(16) 'The Executive Committee nominates the international secretary of the Communist Women's Movement, and organises the Women's Section of the Communist International.'<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen that the Third International is

<sup>1</sup> From the *Communist International*, No. 13, pp. 71-75, Petrograd, Smolny. Kabinett G. Zinovieff.

merely an instrument of Bolshevism run by the Russian oligarchy. Its constitution, nominally based on democratic principles, is so arranged, like that of the Soviet Government, as to centralise authority in Moscow. Zinovieff has always occupied the presidential chair from the beginning; the Executive Committee does just what he says, and the Congress does what the Committee says. Provision is made in paragraphs 8 and 9 for excluding any person or group that shows signs of independence, and for keeping a hand on the affiliated national Communist Parties. Thus the policy of extreme centralisation, always advocated by Lenin, is secured. This point was emphasised over and over again at the second congress. In the official thesis on the rôle of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution it is stated:

‘The C.I. holds that especially in the period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat the Communist Party must be built on the basis of an iron proletarian centralism. In order to lead the working-class successfully in the laborious and stern civil war that has broken out the Communist Party must create an iron military order in its own ranks. The experiences of the Communist Party in the Russian civil war have shown that without the strictest discipline, without complete centralism, and without the full confidence of all party organisations in the central authority, victory is impossible.’<sup>1</sup>

Later the extreme centralisation was nominally relaxed, and in 1922 the Executive Committee

<sup>1</sup> *Communist International*, No. 13, p. 103

was enlarged to 24 members and 10 substitutes, together with a chairman; but the controlling influence remained the same. The trade unions were to be brought under the same authority.

‘The Communists must strive to establish the fullest possible unity between the unions and the Communist Party, and subordinate the unions to the actual direction of the party, as the vanguard of the workers’ revolution. To this end the Communists must everywhere within the unions and the works committees create Communist groups, with whose help they can make themselves masters of the trade union movement and direct it.’<sup>1</sup>

So, too, the Press. The first of the twenty-one conditions for affiliation to the C.I. lays down the complete subordination of the Press. In view of recent events and Bolshevik intrigues in other countries, particularly in the British Empire, it is desirable to give the conditions of affiliation in full. They show that in undermining the loyalty of the army, as in the Campbell case, which led to the downfall of the Labour Government, the British Communist Party were only fulfilling the pledges they had given and carrying out orders; and also that the celebrated Zinovieff letter<sup>2</sup> was completely in keeping with the whole purpose and policy of the Moscow International. The conditions are as follows:

(1) ‘The entire propaganda and agitation must bear a thoroughly Communistic character,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 119.    <sup>2</sup> See next Chapter.

and accord with the programme and decisions of the C.I. All Press organs of the party must be conducted by reliable Communists who have proved their devotion to the cause of the proletariat. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat must not be spoken of as merely a current stereotyped formula, but must be so propagated that its necessity is made intelligible to every simple workman, workwoman, soldier and peasant from the facts of daily life, which must be systematically observed by our Press and exploited day by day.

‘The periodical and ordinary Press and all publication offices of the party must be completely subordinated to the central authority, without regard to the question whether the party as a whole is at any given moment legal or illegal. It is not permissible for the publication offices to misuse their independence and pursue a policy which does not completely coincide with that of the party. In the columns of the Press, in popular meetings, in the trade unions, in the co-operative societies—everywhere where adherents of the Third International can gain admittance—it is necessary to stigmatise systematically and mercilessly not only the bourgeoisie but also their assistants, the Reformists of all shades.

(2) ‘Every organisation which desires affiliation to the C.I. must regularly and systematically remove from all more or less responsible posts in the Labour movement, (party organisations, editorial offices, trade unions, Parliamentary groups, co-operative societies, Communal administrations) the Reformist and Centre elements, and replace them by approved Communists, no matter

if the place of "experienced" opportunists be taken, particularly at the beginning, by simple workmen from the rank and file.

(3) 'In almost all European and American countries the class conflict has entered on the phase of civil war. In these circumstances Communists can place no reliance on civil legality. They are in duty bound to create everywhere a parallel illegal apparatus, which will assist the party at the decisive moment to fulfil their duty towards the revolution. In all countries where it is impossible, on account of a state of siege and exclusion regulations, for Communists to carry on the whole of their work legally, it is absolutely necessary to combine legal with illegal activities.

(4) 'The duty of disseminating Communist ideas includes the special obligation of an intensive systematic propaganda in the Army. Where this agitation is repressed by prohibitive regulations it is to be illicitly carried on. To abandon this task would be equivalent to a betrayal of revolutionary duty, and incompatible with membership of the Third International.

(5) 'A systematic and planned agitation in agricultural areas is necessary. The working-class cannot be victorious unless it has behind it the land proletariat and at least part of the poorest peasantry, and has secured by its policy the neutrality of the rest of the village population. The Communist task in agricultural areas is of outstanding importance at the present time. It must be carried on chiefly with the help of the revolutionary Communistic workers of the

town and the land, who have agricultural connections. To abandon this task or to hand it over to unreliable half-Reformist hands is equivalent to abandoning the proletarian revolution.

(6) 'Every party which desires affiliation to the Third International is bound to oppose not only open social patriotism, but also the insincerity and hypocrisy of social pacifism, and systematically to impress upon the workers that without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism no international court of arbitration, no agreement about the reduction of armaments, no "democratic" reconstruction of the League of Nations, will be in a position to prevent new imperialist wars.

(7) 'Parties which wish to belong to the C.I. are bound to acknowledge the complete breach with Reformism and the politics of the Centre, and to propagate this breach in the remotest circles of their members. Without that a consistent Communistic policy is impossible.

'The C.I. demands the unqualified and definitive execution of this breach with the least possible delay. The C.I. cannot consent to allow that notorious opportunists, as now represented by Turati, Kautsky, Hilferding, Hillquit, Longuet, MacDonald, Modigliani, and others, should have the right to count as belonging to the Third International. That could only lead to the Third International becoming just like the Second, which has gone to pieces.

(8) 'In the question of colonies and subject-peoples there is needed a particularly clear and sharply defined attitude from parties in those

countries whose bourgeoisie possess colonies and hold other nations in subjection. Every party which wishes to belong to the Third International is bound to expose the intrigues of its own Imperialists, to support, not only in words, but with deeds, every movement for freedom in the colonies, to demand the expulsion of native Imperialists from the colonies, to cultivate in the hearts of the workers of its own country a real brotherly relation to the working population of the colonies and the subject-nations, and to carry on a systematic agitation among the troops of its country against any and every subjection of the colonial peoples.

(9) 'Every party which wishes to belong to the C.I. must develop a systematic and persistent Communist activity within the trade unions, works committees, co-operative societies, and other mass organisations of workmen. Within these organisations it is necessary to organise cells, which by continuous and persistent work must win the unions, etc., to the cause of Communism. The cells are bound to expose everywhere in their daily work the treason of the social patriots and the vacillation of the Centre. The Communist cells must be completely subordinated to the party as a whole.

(10) 'Every party affiliated to the C.I. is bound to carry on a determined fight against the Amsterdam International of the yellow unions. It must propagate among the workers in the most energetic manner the necessity of breaking with the Amsterdam Yellow International. It must support with every means

the growing international unity of the red trade unions which adhere to the C.I.

(11) 'Parties which wish to belong to the C.I. are bound to submit the personnel of their Parliamentary groups to revision, to remove all unreliable elements from them, to subordinate these groups to the party authority, not only by word, but in deed, by demanding from each single member of Parliament that his entire activity be subjected to the interests of a really revolutionary propaganda and agitation.

(12) 'The parties affiliated to the C.I. must be built on the basis of the principle of democratic centralisation. In the present period of acute civil war the Communist Party will be in a position to fulfil its duty only if it is organised in the most centralised possible manner, if iron discipline rules in it, and if the party centre, upheld by the confidence of the membership, is furnished with the fullest power, authority and the most far-reaching rights.

(13) 'The Communist parties of those countries in which they carry on their work legally must from time to time undertake cleansings (new registrations) of the composition of their party organisations in order to purge the party systematically of petty bourgeois lower-middle class elements that have crept in.

(14) 'Every party which wishes to belong to the C.I. is bound to lend unreserved support to every Soviet Republic in its fight against counter-revolutionary forces. The Communist parties must carry on an unambiguous propaganda to prevent the transport of munitions to Fs



enemies of the Soviet Republics ; and, further, they must carry on propaganda with every means legal and illegal among troops dispatched to strangle workers' republics.

(15) 'Parties which have still retained their old Social-Democratic programmes are now bound to alter them as quickly as possible, and to work out a new Communist programme in the sense of the decisions of the C.I. in conformity with the particular conditions of their own country. As a rule the programme of every party affiliated to the C.I. must be approved by the regular Congress of the C.I. or by the Executive. In case of non-approval of a party programme by the Executive the party concerned has the right of appeal to the Congress of the C.I.

(16) 'All decisions of the Congress of the C.I., as also decisions of the Executive, are binding on all affiliated bodies. The C.I., having to work under the conditions of acute civil war, must be far more centralised in its structure than was the case with the Second International. At the same time the C.I. and its Executive Committee must, as a matter of course, in all their proceedings take account of the different conditions under which individual parties have to fight and work, and adopt decisions of universal application only in such questions as admit of it.

(17) 'In this connection it is incumbent on all parties wishing to belong to the C.I. to alter their titles. Every such party must bear the name "Communist International" of such-and-such a country (section of the Third Communist

International). The question of title is not merely formal, but in a high degree a political question of great importance. The C.I. has declared war on the whole bourgeois world and the Yellow Social-Democratic Parties. It is necessary that the difference between the Communist parties and the old official Social-Democratic and Socialist parties, which have betrayed the banner of the working-class, should be made clear to every simple working-man.

(18) 'All leading Press organs of the parties of all countries are bound to print all important official documents of the Executive of the C.I.

(19) 'All parties which belong to the C.I. or have presented a request for admission are bound as soon as possible, and not later than four months after the Second Congress, to call an extraordinary meeting to examine all these conditions. At the same time, the central authorities must see to it that the decisions of the Second Congress are made known to all local organisations.

(20) 'Those parties which now desire admission to the Third International, but have not radically altered their previous tactics, must before admission see to it that not less than two-thirds of the members of their central committee and of all important central institutions are composed of comrades who have already before the Second Congress publicly expressed themselves unequivocally in favour of entering the Third International. Exceptions are permissible with the approval of the Executive of the Third International. The Executive of the C.I.

has the right to make exceptions also for representatives of the Centre mentioned in (7).

(21) 'Those party members who are in thorough disagreement with the conditions and principles laid down by the C.I. are to be expelled from the party.

'This applies particularly to delegates to the Extraordinary Congress.'

The conditions are carefully devised to combine widespread, multiple and systematic propagation of Bolshevism at the circumference with complete concentration of authority at the centre and disciplinary means for ensuring obedience. Only approved and strictly orthodox adherents were allowed to come in or stay in, and a close watch was to be kept on everyone to detect any signs of independence or wavering that would warrant expulsion. The whole organisation was quite obviously created in order to realise Lenin's life-long vision of universal revolution under his direction, and no precaution was omitted to make it a close preserve. Its professed independence of the Moscow Government is belied, not only by its whole history, its origin, aims, methods, statutes and official personnel, but also by the admissions of Zinovieff, in a speech made at the thirteenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party early in 1924 and reported in the *Pravda*. He said :

'While Lenin was in a state to direct our work, we, the members of the Communist International, came to him for advice, and the whole Central Committee agreed that his views were to be put

into practice without further debate. When this became impossible, Lenin's guidance had to be replaced by that of a collective body.'

This is quite incompatible with the claim that the C.I. has no connection with the Moscow Government. But the pretended separation has the advantage of enabling the latter to speak with two voices. It can make promises to foreign Governments with one voice and with the other issue contrary orders to the affiliated Communist bodies in the countries with whose Government it is negotiating. In 1922 the Russian members of the Executive Committee, in addition to Zinovieff, were Bukharin and Radek, with Lenin and Trotsky as substitutes; in 1924 they were Rykoff, Kameneff, Sokolnikoff, and Trotsky.

At the Third Congress, in 1921, however, the movement had already begun to weaken, and prospects were less rosy. The failure of the 'Triple Alliance' in connection with the great coal dispute in this country earlier in the year had been a severe blow to the Bolshevist cause, which has never recovered here since that really critical moment. In France, too, it had received a severe blow. The Congress consequently directed particular attention to the policy of developing agitation in the trade unions, works and factories, etc., and emphasised more fully the procedure to be adopted on the lines indicated above. In furtherance of this object, and as a counter-blast to the existing International Federation of Trade Unions, referred to above as the Amsterdam International, a new Red trade union federation was formed.

The Amsterdam International, it must be explained, dates originally from 1901, when a meeting was held at Copenhagen and a movement started to promote the international co-operation of trade unions. Subsequently meetings were held annually, and later biennially, at different places, and in 1913 the title, International Federation of Trade Unions, was adopted. The headquarters were in Berlin, and the Secretary was C. Legien. During the war the organisation suffered the same eclipse as others; but in 1919 it was resuscitated at Berne in connection with the Socialist meeting mentioned above, and it met at Amsterdam later in the same year, when it was formally reconstructed. Congresses have subsequently been held in 1920 (London), 1922 (Rome) and 1924. The Federation is composed of national central bodies, such as the Trades Union Congress, which represents Great Britain upon it. The total membership of affiliated bodies at the end of 1921 was returned as over 20 millions, to which Germany contributed eight millions and Great Britain five. The regular business of the Federation used to be the mutual assistance and co-operation of trade unions by the collection and transmission of information and the organisation of financial aid; but since the war it has been subject to the same influences as other bodies, and has moved towards Socialism of a moderate kind. It has been chiefly occupied with the problem of preventing war, and in 1922 organised a Peace Congress at the Hague. The main plank in this policy is the prevention of transport by the combined international action of transport workers. W. A. Appleton resigned the

presidency in 1920. The present Secretaries of the I.F.T.U. are E. Fimmen and J. Oudegeest.

It was in opposition to this body that the Communist International at Moscow set up in 1921 its own trade union section, under the name of the Red International of Trade Unions. A provisional council was appointed, and an executive committee, consisting of Tomski (Russia), Murphy (Great Britain) and Rosmer (France); but the whole move was carried on under the direction of the Executive of the Communist International. It had been prepared at the Second Congress in 1920, when the Executive Committee called a conference of certain trade union delegates, who were present at the Congress, and Zinovieff, who presided, explained the position. He 'pointed out the necessity of creating a Red Trade Union International, which would fight hand-in-hand with the Communist International under the banner of Communism, and called for the exertion of all forces against the Amsterdam International,' which he stigmatised as 'a political tool in the hands of the Entente.' It was the task of the revolutionary proletariat, he said 'to wrest this weapon from them and smash it.' The new body was to be a section of the trade union movement, which would 'not only make clear the relations of unions, syndicates, etc., to the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but would also promote the process, already begun, of detaching the working masses of the whole world from the Yellow International.'

Sundry discussions followed, in which considerable dissension was shown on the part of the

Syndicalists, shop stewards and the I.W.W. ; but eventually they were talked round and the provisional council set up. The statement of aims contained the following points :

(1) ' Widespread propaganda and agitation for the ideas of the class war, the social revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and mass action for the overthrow of the capitalist order of society and the bourgeois State.

(2) ' Opposition to the policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie and to the hope of a peaceful transition from Capitalism to Socialism, which poisons the trade union movement.

(3) ' Unification of the revolutionary class elements in the trade union movement for a decisive struggle against the Labour Office of the League of Nations, as well as against the programme and tactics of the Amsterdam International.'<sup>1</sup>

At the Second Congress in 1922 it was stated that the trade union membership represented was 12½ millions, in 32 countries, of which Russia accounted for eight millions. England was credited with 300,000 and Germany with 1½ millions. These imposing figures appear to be arrived at by adding up the total membership of the unions to which delegates belong. In spite of them the Red International was not a very happy and harmonious family. The Syndicalist elements again showed their teeth. They resented the intimate connection with the Communist International, because it is a political body, which is contrary to their principles, and

<sup>1</sup> *The Communist International*, No. 14, p. 210.

demanding more independence. To appease them the arrangement, whereby each body had a representative on the Executive Committee of the other, was dropped. In spite of this concession the Anarchist and Syndicalist elements in several countries were not satisfied, and proceeded to form another international of their own, called the International Association of Workers. It cannot be said to be more revolutionary than the other, but it is more directly revolutionary. It rejects all political means, and relies on direct action. Of its activities little is known, but its formation is of interest as evidence of the vitality of Syndicalism and of the invincible tendency of revolutionary organisations to dissension and sectarian cleavage.

On the other hand, the Red T.U.I. has recently made overtures to the Amsterdam International for unification. This move was decided at the Third Annual Congress, held in Moscow in July 1924, on the motion of Losovsky, the president, and it cannot have been made without the cognisance and approval of the Communist International and the Moscow Government. In view of the unqualified hostility to the Amsterdam International previously displayed, this change of attitude suggests that Bolshevism had not been so successful in capturing the trade unions as had been expected, and that the policy of getting inside the Amsterdam International and capturing it was thought to offer better prospects. At the same time it indicates the trend of the Amsterdam International towards the Left, as otherwise there would be no chance of success. But the good faith of the overture is rendered doubtful by the simultaneous creation of the



'national minority movement' in British trade unions referred to below.

With regard to the parent body, the Communist International itself, the decline in membership of the affiliated Communist Parties since 1920 has already been noted (p. 48). This fact, together with the disappointing results of the Red Trade Union section, which was intended to be a remedy, has pointed the need of redoubled propagandist activity, particularly by the method of penetration in both political and industrial fields. The last Congress, held in June 1924, was distinguished by the exceptional attention paid in this respect to Great Britain, probably because of the advent to office of the Labour Party, which it was hoped to convert into a Communist Government or to force by internal and external pressure into a policy favourable to Bolshevism. Zinovieff declared that the British section was now the leading one, surpassing in importance both the German and the Russian, and he emphasised the need of intensifying Communist activity among the rank and file. The Congress, as it always does, accepted his view—which was also that of the Moscow Government, according to his own statement earlier in the year—and decided that the British field was to be cultivated more than any other until the Communist Party dominated the trade unions and the whole Labour movement. The British delegate, J. T. Murphy, claimed for the Communists the credit of getting up recent strikes, particularly that of the railway shopmen. He said that the Communists, though few in number, were rapidly gaining power within the unions. The Congress declared

that the Communists must worm their way into the trade unions and create a revolutionary Left Wing.

It was immediately after this Congress that the Red Trade Union section had their meeting, also in Moscow, and decided to approach the Amsterdam International, as explained above. A commission, of which two Englishmen, T. Mann and H. Pollitt, were members, was appointed to carry on an intensive campaign for unification. The method adopted is to split the trade union movement.

In August a conference of Communists was held in London under the presidency of T. Mann, and the formation of a 'national minority movement' was announced, in opposition to the general trade union movement, which is affiliated to the Amsterdam International. It appears from the official bulletin of the Red International that this move was arranged at the meeting in Moscow in July, and that a full programme for the new organisation was then presented by a Russian delegate. The so-called 'national minority movement' is merely a special branch of the Red International set up within the British trade union movement at the instigation of Moscow, in order, apparently, to push it over towards Bolshevism so far as to demand acceptance of the Red International by its Amsterdam rival. Several attempts were made to move the Trades Union Congress in this direction at the annual meeting early in September; but they met with little success, though the Congress has become thoroughly Socialist—according to the English standard. The rebuff was emphasised

at the same time by the decision of the Executive of the Labour Party to admit no Communists as official candidates for Parliament—a decision subsequently endorsed, with others unfavourable to the Communists, by large majorities at the annual conference of the Party later in the same month.

The question of amalgamating the two trade union Internationals was at the end of 1924 left hanging in the air. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress had undertaken to continue negotiations with a view to union, but the conditions of assent laid down by the Amsterdam International were tantamount to extinction of the Red International. Each wanted union on its own terms, which means that the other side gives way. This is the notion of agreement and peace always entertained by combative persons in general and Socialists in particular.

In February 1925, however, a meeting of the I.F.T.U. was held at Amsterdam, at which a proposal was made by the British section for a joint conference, not with the Red International, but with the Russian trade unions, which constitute its back-bone. This move, which was apparently the result of a visit paid to Russia by British trade union delegates in the previous autumn, met with strong opposition, but eventually a resolution was passed in favour of admitting the Russian unions 'when they express their desire to that effect.'

There are, then, three trade union Internationals representing Socialism (Amsterdam), Communism (Moscow) and Syndicalism (International Association of Workers). And to these a fourth, which is anti-Socialist, must be added. This is the International of Christian Trade Unions, which are

strong in Germany, Austria and Italy, and wholly opposed to Marxian Socialism. The First Congress was held at the Hague in 1920, when the affiliated membership was stated to be over three millions, and others have been held since.

The foregoing account of the Trade Union Internationals is necessary for a right comprehension of the situation, and it seemed convenient to take it in connection with the Communist International of Moscow; but it forms a digression from the subject of International Socialism proper, to which the trade union organisations described are accessory. There are to-day two rival Socialist Internationals, which are the respective political counterparts of the Red Trade Union International of Moscow and the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions. One is the Communist International, with which we have dealt at length; the other is the New International formed at Hamburg in 1923. To explain the origin of the latter we must go back to the Berne Conference of 1919, mentioned on page 53. It was there stated that the Bolsheviki hurriedly summoned an international congress of their own in order to anticipate the movement represented by the Berne Conference, and this led us to the subject of the Communist International, followed by digressions on the trade union organisation connected with it and the Amsterdam rival of the latter. We now resume the thread of the story from page 54.

The upshot of the Berne Conference and of the division of opinion described above was the appointment by the majority of a committee to make provisional arrangements for the reconstruction of

the Second International. This committee prepared a constitution for presentation to a congress held at Geneva in 1920. By this time the prevailing national tendencies were separating themselves out from the general confusion and becoming clearer. Although in every country opinion among Socialists was still distracted and split up in all directions, some larger lines of cleavage were becoming visible and tending towards a more definite grouping. In Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Scandinavia, the prevailing inclination was towards revival of the Second International; in France, Italy and Switzerland it was rather towards the Third International of Moscow, then at the zenith of its fortunes and its pride. But between these divergent tendencies a third movement intervened, having its seat in Vienna. It was composed of Austrians and certain groups in France, Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain, which halted between two opinions, and, being unwilling to revive the Second International or to join the Third, attempted to solve the problem by combining both in a Fourth, entitled the International Working Union of Socialist Parties. These are the groups called the Centre or Centrists in the Bolshevik documents quoted above. Their efforts failed. The Moscow people, flushed with pride, regarded them with contemptuous superiority, and called their organisation the Two-and-a-half International. The Berne Committee were more favourably disposed, and it was decided at the Geneva meeting in 1920 to carry on negotiations with the Two-and-a-half or Vienna International. A joint conference was held in Berlin in 1922, and then it was

found impossible to come to any agreement with the Moscow authorities, who were ill-treating their own non-Bolshevist Socialists and those of Georgia, which had been conquered by arms in spite of Moscow's formal recognition of its independence in 1920. Since these very Socialists were the allies of the British-German-Belgian majority group, which had set up the Berne Committee, and since Moscow neither could nor would give any guarantee of good faith, the unification plan fell to the ground. These proceedings explain the animosity displayed at intervals by Mr. MacDonald, and more consistently by Mr. Snowden, against the Bolsheviks, because the negotiations for unification had been entrusted at Geneva to the British group.

The upshot was abandonment of the idea of unification, at least for the time being, and the formation of a new International at Hamburg in 1923. Its title is the Labour and Socialist International, but it is commonly called the New International, or the L.S.I. Thirty countries, including Georgia and the Ukraine, were represented at the congress, which took place in May 1923. It was dominated by Great Britain and Germany, with Belgium, Denmark, Austria, France and Czechoslovakia in the second line. Great Britain sent 21 delegates, representing the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, the Independent Labour Party, Fabian Society and Social Democratic Federation, with an aggregate nominal membership of 3,344,866; Germany sent 50 delegates, representing the United Social Democratic Party (Majority Socialists), with a membership of 1,230,000. The large membership credited to Great

Britain is due to the inclusion of trade unions. This was also the case with Belgium, where the Labour Party was credited with a membership of 617,571, and with one or two other countries. Hence, presumably, the title 'Labour and Socialist.' The organisation is, however, wholly Socialist, as the statement of its aims and objects in the constitution sufficiently proves :

(1) 'The L.S.I. is a union of such parties as accept the principle of the economic emancipation of the workers from capitalist domination, and the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth as their object, and the class struggle, which finds its expression in the independent political and industrial action of the workers' organisation as a means of realising that object.

(2) 'The object of the L.S.I. is to unify the activities of the affiliated parties, to arrange common action, and to bring about the entire unification of the International Labour and Socialist movement on the basis of this constitution.

'The parties associated in the L.S.I. undertake not to affiliate to any other political international.

(3) 'The L.S.I. can only become a reality if its decisions in all international questions are binding on its affiliated bodies. The resolutions of the International will therefore imply a self-imposed limitation of the autonomy of the affiliated organisations.

(4) 'The L.S.I. is not only an effective instrument in peace, but just as absolutely essential during war.

‘ In conflicts between nations the International shall be recognised as the highest authority.

(5) ‘ The carrying out of this task is entrusted by the L.S.I. to (a) The International Congress ; (b) The Executive Committee ; (c) The Bureau ; (d) The Administrative Committee ; (e) The Secretariat.’

The first and third paragraphs are the most important. The first reveals the L.S.I. as professing Marxian Socialism in accordance with the interpretation of the German Social Democrats (Majority). It recognises the class war, and implies the use of ordinary political and industrial means—i.e. elections and strikes—for carrying it on. But it is to be noticed that there is no express mention of constitutional or evolutionary methods, and the way is left open to revolutionary violence, which may also be described as ‘ independent political and industrial action.’ Probably violence was not contemplated, but it would fall within the terms of the constitution if it were. The third paragraph binds every affiliated body to accept the decisions of the L.S.I. and to surrender its own independence so far as may be required by this condition. Since the affiliated body may be, and recently has been, identical with the Government of the country it represents, the condition entails the surrender of national independence. It may be argued that adherence to the League of Nations entails the same surrender, but that is expressly guarded against in the Covenant ; and, moreover, adherence to the League is a State contract made by Government with other Governments for strictly defined



purposes, not an agreement with a private and irresponsible body for vaguely defined but subversive ends. It is certain that if the Conservative Party, for instance, bound itself in a similar manner to some international organisation of a different complexion, objection would be raised by the Labour Party; nor can it be maintained that the position is free from danger to national interests.

The leaders of the Labour Party appear to be conscious of this themselves; for on taking office they resigned the prominent position they occupied on the International. But the Labour Party, whose nominees they are, continued to be bound by the International and subject to its degrees. Since the Labour Party went out of office the ex-Ministers, who will conduct 'His Majesty's Opposition,' have apparently not resumed their posts on the International. These were three seats (out of thirty-four) on the Executive Committee, held by Messrs. MacDonald, Thomas and Henderson, the joint secretaryship held by Mr. T. Shaw with Friedrich Adler (Austria), and practically the whole of the Administrative Committee, which is made up of the members already named, together with Mr. Sidney Webb and three other English Socialists. The seat of the secretariat is London. The position is curious and unprecedented, though Denmark and Sweden have followed the example to a certain extent by installing minority Socialist Governments, but they are much less closely identified with the International.

With regard to voting strength at the Congress, Germany and Great Britain have 30 votes each;

France and Czecho-Slovakia have 16 ; Italy, Belgium and Austria have 15 ; and the rest fewer in a descending scale down to Armenia and Latvia, which have two votes, and Bulgaria, Danzig, Esthonia, Yugo-Slavia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Poale Zion, Turkey and Ukraine, with one vote each. Great Britain has therefore 30 votes out of 245 in the Congress and 3 votes out of 34 on the Executive Committee, which is the real governing body.

International Socialism, then, is represented at the end of 1924 by two rival organisations, one having its seat in Moscow and calling itself Communist, the other having its seat in London and calling itself Labour and Socialist. Each has its corresponding trade union International, though the relations are not quite the same ; the Red Trade Union International is much more closely associated with the Communist International, whose direct offspring it is, than the Amsterdam Federation is with the more recently formed L.S.I. There are also two international organisations of young workers—the Communist Youth International and the Young Socialists' International—which stand in somewhat similar relations to the principal Internationals.

This will be a convenient place to deal with the meaning of the terms Communism and Socialism, which are the cause of much confusion.

The origin and meaning of the word Socialism have been fully discussed in Part I, in which it was presented in two senses—(1) The broad, abstract and philosophical sense of an extreme assertion of the social element in human nature  
the antithesis of individualism ; (2) The narrow,

concrete and quasi-technical sense of a movement for converting the private ownership of capital (means of production, etc.) into public ownership. Communism is a very much older term and a still older conception. The word is Latin—*communitas rerum*—which means properly sharing things in common, and in its complete form implies the abolition of private ownership, not only of capital or even of all property, but of women and children, and, in short, everything. Primitive man is supposed to have lived in a state of communism, though nothing is really known of his social life. Some savages to-day practise a certain amount of communism, especially those that have least to share; others recognise the rights of private property, and strictly enforce them, in some cases by penalties of extreme severity. No general conclusion can be drawn from what is guessed about prehistoric conditions or from what is known about existing primitive societies, though reference is often made to both as furnishing, on somewhat obscure grounds, arguments for Communism.

The principle of Communism was, however, fully recognised and discussed at length by philosophers in the ancient world; and to some small extent it existed in certain civilised communities. In Sparta and Crete, for instance, meals were in common. It was much more fully practised by the Essenes, a pre-Christian Jewish sect, whose model of life was based on principles very similar to those of Christianity—poverty, benevolence and brotherly love. They were a celibate monastic order, living among their fellow-men in different places under their own rules, which included the holding of

all property in common. In these respects they closely resembled the early Christians, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. During the succeeding centuries, Communism was repeatedly practised by various religious bodies, and it was recognised as the ideal Christian form of economic life by the Fathers of the Church. In the thirteenth century the whole question of private property was discussed in his usual masterly manner by St. Thomas Aquinas, whose judgment has ever since been accepted by the Church of Rome. Sharing in common was recognised as a Christian ideal, but held to be impracticable because of man's fallen nature ; or, as we should say in ordinary terms, it is incompatible with human nature. St. Thomas, following Aristotle, held that private property was not only lawful, but necessary to human life, for three reasons : '(1) Everyone is more concerned to take care of anything that belongs to himself alone than of that which is common to all or many ; since everyone, shunning trouble, leaves to someone else that which is common property, as happens when there are many servants. (2) Human affairs are conducted in a more orderly manner if the particular responsibility for looking after anything rests on individual persons ; there would be endless confusion if anyone in a vague way had the care of anything he pleased. (3) A more peaceful state among men is preserved ; for we see that quarrels more frequently arise among those who hold anything in common ownership without division.'

The wisdom of these arguments has been repeatedly proved by experience. Many Communistic settlements have been founded from time to time,

both by religious bodies and, later, by Socialists ; but few have lasted any length of time, although they were on a voluntary basis and peopled by enthusiasts. Those have lasted longest which were not only inspired by a strong religious motive, but also embraced a rule of poverty. The Russian Doukhobors, who still exist as a small, separate community in Canada, are the most conspicuous example. The fallacy underlying the secular settlements, and fostered by the literary Utopias, is the belief that because men inspired by unselfishness and the sense of brotherhood would voluntarily share everything with their neighbours, therefore the establishment of a system of sharing will create that spirit. It is confounding cause and effect. The same mistake is made in a more extreme form by those Socialists who identify Socialism with Christianity, and expect a compulsory economic system to produce a Christian spirit. But that question is more fully discussed in Chapter IV.

Communism in the sense indicated, which is the original and proper sense, is concerned with the ownership and use of property, and there are several different forms of it, into which I need not enter. Its relation to Socialism depends on the sense in which the latter is understood. If in the broad sense of an assertion of the social as against the individual principle, then Communism is clearly a form of Socialism, and included in it with other forms ; but if in the narrow sense of the common ownership of capital, the relationship is reversed. The common ownership of all property postulated by Communism includes the common ownership of capital, so that Socialism in that particular sense—

which is the current one—is a restricted form of Communism.

But Communism has acquired a quite different meaning, which has to do, not with the economic end, but with the political means for attaining the end. It signifies the seizure of power by force or violent revolution, as distinguished from constitutional methods; and since such seizure can hardly be prepared for openly, it carries with it the idea of secret conspiracy. This meaning emerged clearly and became current in the revolutionary 'forties of the nineteenth century, particularly among Germans. Probably the idea originated in the conspiracy for an economic revolution in Paris—the conspiracy of 'The Equals'—organised in 1796 by Babœuf, who attempted to translate into action the Communistic visions of Morelly set forth in his *Code de la Nature* in 1755. Morelly's work was a philosophical sketch of an ideal society based on a Utopia, the 'Basiliade,' published in 1753. It was a revival of the old Communist ideas, and though he himself did not think his ideal society was practicable, his theories exercised a powerful and lasting influence. Babœuf attempted to realise them, as he declared at his trial, at which he quoted freely from Morelly in his defence. It was Morelly who enunciated the celebrated principles afterwards adopted by Louis Blanc: 'From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs'; and to-day the motto of the French 'General Confederation of Labour' is taken from Morelly.

Babœuf's attempt associated the idea of Communism with secret revolutionary conspiracy, whereas Socialism, when it came up some thirty years later,

as described in Chapters I and II, was associated with benevolent projects for the voluntary and peaceful reconstruction of society. The distinction was pointed out in 1842 by Lorenz von Stein in his book on French Socialism, which exercised a wide influence in Germany. I have already referred in Part I to the secret revolutionary societies formed by German refugees in France, Switzerland and Belgium at this period, and particularly to Weitling's League of the Just, which was joined by Marx, changed its name to Communist League, and was transferred to London. It was for this League that the Communist Manifesto was written, urging the proletarian revolution, and Bolshevism is the Communist Manifesto realised.

Such is the pedigree of the word Communism. To-day it stands over against Socialism as it did eighty years ago. The distinction is not between the economic ends, which are virtually identical, but between the means. In his earlier speeches Lenin used the two words indifferently, sometimes one and sometimes the other, as equivalents, without any material difference. It was not until later, when the International was founded, that he settled down to Communism in order to distinguish it from the rival movement of the Right Wing of Socialism. Both aim at the abolition of Capitalism and the establishment of the 'Co-operative Commonwealth,' but the Communists would achieve it by force and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat—as the Russian Bolsheviks did—while the Socialists rely on constitutional political action. There does not seem to be any room for compromise between the two conceptions; but the desire for unity is

stronger than it was, and it may possibly be achieved. What is certain, however, is that unification could not be attained without a certain amount of expulsion, and would be speedily followed by a fresh division.

In order to show more clearly the relative position of the four Internationals—political and trade unionist—and for the purpose of easy reference, they are presented in tabular form as follows :

### THE INTERNATIONALS

#### I. COMMUNIST.

The Communist International, also called 'Third International' and 'Comintern'—founded 1919, Moscow.

#### 2. SOCIALIST.

Labour and Socialist International, founded at Hamburg, 1923.

The Red International of Trade Unions, also called 'Profintern'—founded 1921, Moscow.

International Federation of Trade Unions, also called Amsterdam International—founded 1901.



## CHAPTER III

### THE GENERAL MOVEMENT

I SAID in Chapter I that the distinctive feature of the third phase of Socialism, in which we now are, is that the theories of the second phase are being put to the test of experience. The progress made by the movement has brought it to that point under the stimulus of the war. I then gave an account of the greatest of these experiments, which is Bolshevism, and followed it up, in the last chapter, with an explanation of the two Internationals, showing the relations between them and the two schools of Communism and Socialism for which they stand respectively. This brings us conveniently to an examination of the post-war experience of the latter—that is, the Right Wing, or Constitutional Socialism—which has been put to the test of experience as well as the Left Wing, or Communism, though much less completely. That is in the nature of things, because revolutionary Communism necessarily essays to abolish Capitalism—which is the common aim—all at one stroke, whereas the constitutional process cannot be other than more or less gradual and tentative. The experience to be derived from it is consequently less decisive and convincing, but it has some value.

The effect of the war on Socialism as a whole was first to thrust the movement back, and then

to bring it forward again with redoubled strength in peace. This return wave received everywhere a special stimulus from the example of Bolshevism, which greatly inflamed men's imaginations. The cessation of war was followed by a confused but intense turmoil, varying in character and degree in different countries, but general throughout Europe. It was naturally more marked in belligerent than in neutral countries, and most marked in the defeated nations of Central Europe, where political revolutions reflected popular discontent and enhanced the general excitement. Never has the atmosphere been so widely and directly favourable to extreme revolutionary agitation, which is a contagious fever; and for a time it seemed as though the balance might turn in favour of a general violent upheaval, after the model of Bolshevik Russia. But that passed, and by 1921 the tide had definitely turned. The Russian Government itself had to retrace its steps, and elsewhere the balance began to incline visibly towards the Right Wing, which gradually regained ascendancy. The extreme excitement subsided, and the movement settled down broadly and by degrees to constitutional procedure, except where Bolshevism held sway by force of arms. The change is reflected in the history of the Internationals related in the last chapter. Proceeding on constitutional lines, Socialism has advanced so rapidly in the last two years that in 1924 there were eight Socialist Administrations in office, which may be called the net result on the political side, without counting the new Baltic States in which a sort of Socialism prevails. And six out of the eight

were British, including the central Imperial Government—a remarkable fact, not sufficiently appreciated. The other two were Denmark and Sweden.

It is neither possible nor necessary to treat every country in so much detail as in Part I. The story is in many cases too obscure, confused and uncertain or disputed to be susceptible of exact treatment, and changes follow one another so rapidly that minor details soon become invalid. But the more salient facts in those countries, to which particular interest attaches for one reason or another, must be stated to give a broad idea of the movement in its present phase.

GERMANY.—Particular interest attaches to Germany, both as the headquarters of Socialism throughout the second phase and also as the scene of a complete political revolution, involving the substitution of republics for monarchies and a federation of republics for an Empire. No other country, except Russia and Austria, has undergone such a complete political transformation, and there is none in which Socialism might have been expected, from the position it had already attained before the war, to find such an opportunity of emerging victorious from the national turmoil. But that has not happened, though at one time it looked likely.

In October 1918 a provisional Government was formed which included some Socialists, a portentous sign in Germany. There followed revolutionary outbreaks in November. The German Bolsheviki, who called themselves Spartacists (in memory of

Spartacus, a slave, who led a rebellion against the Roman Government in 71 B.C.), had been actively agitating for some time under the leadership of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and they seized the opportunity to introduce Bolshevism. Soviets were set up in different places, and a Soviet Congress was held in Berlin. The bulk of the Socialists, however, refused to go over, and they had their reward when the Kaiser abdicated on November 9, and a Supreme Council was formed with a Socialist Chancellor and five other Socialist members. Early in 1919 a general election was held under a new franchise (adult suffrage, male and female) for a National Assembly. The Socialists emerged with 187 seats as against 110 in 1912, but they were split into two camps—the Majority with 165 and the Minority or Independent Socialists with 22. They polled together about 13 million votes out of a total of over 28 millions. This represents a large increase of Parliamentary strength, but the increase of voting strength relatively to the whole was not remarkable; in 1912 the Social Democrats had polled 34.8 per cent. of the total votes cast, and in 1919 this had risen to 39.6. The Majority Socialists were, however, in 1919 by themselves by far the largest party in the Assembly, and they formed part of the Coalition Government then set up, while the Socialist Chancellor became the Socialist President of the German Republic. In the following August a new constitution was adopted, in which the Reichstag represents the whole nation and the Reichsrat the several States forming the Confederation of Republics which Germany now is.

Meanwhile the Spartacist agitation continued. Soviets were set up all over the country, and serious disturbances lasting for several days occurred in Berlin in January 1919, shortly before the general election. In Bavaria the disorder was still greater, and for a time anarchy reigned in Munich, where the Soviets seized power in April. Civil war was carried on for weeks, in which the Bolshevist section was said to have shown great ferocity. Similar risings were renewed in 1920, but were eventually suppressed. In short, Germany went through the same trial as Russia, but with the opposite result. In 1923, in consequence of several elections in the intervening years and other changes, the Majority Socialists had increased to 173 members in the Reichstag, and the Left Wing, now calling themselves Communists, were reduced to 15; but the Nationalists had also increased their strength, and the Socialists had no more power than before.

There are so many parties in the German Reichstag, and some of them change their names, policies and relations so often, that little can be learnt merely from the figures. Moreover, the question of reparations and the occupation of the Ruhr have dominated German politics, and created an abnormal situation, in which the real trend of opinion is obscured. But it seems certain that in spite of the efforts of Moscow, which has paid special attention to Germany, the Bolshevist cause has no chance of success there, although the general election in May 1924 resulted in a great increase in the number of Communists returned to the Reichstag. The following table shows the position up to that date :

## REICHSTAG ELECTION (MAY 1924)

	Before	After
Social Democrats .....	173	100
Centre.....	68	65
German National Party .....	66	95
German People's Party .....	66	45
German Democratic Party ....	39	28
Bavarian People's Party .....	20	16
Communists .....	15	62
Freedom Party (Fascists) .....	—	32

The most striking features here are the great drop in the number of Social Democrats and the increase of Communists. The latter had undoubtedly increased at the expense of the former, and this was partly due to the Moscow campaign, on which much money was spent. But competent judges attached little importance to it. The anti-Socialist elements had really been strengthened. The actual policy pursued in Germany with regard to the main Socialist question of public *versus* private ownership and control of industry is rather in the direction of extending the principle of bringing in private enterprise again into already socialised industries, by leasing them to companies to work. This has for many years been the practice in certain German municipal enterprises, and it seems now to be extending rapidly, and to include nationally owned industries also, such as railways and mines. It should be added that the German Constitution is now exceedingly democratic, with universal adult suffrage, proportional representation, the referendum and initiative. The most novel and

interesting feature of economic life to-day in Germany is the institution of an advisory economic Parliament, which was set up in 1920. It consists of 326 members, representing all interests, and its functions are to pronounce on all economic measures brought before the Reichstag and to propose measures on its own account. It has no legislative powers, but as a statutory consultative body it is said to work well. It is certainly a much more rational arrangement than the establishment of two Parliaments—a political and an economic one—both equal and sovereign, proposed by the English Socialists.

In December 1924 a new general Reichstag election took place, at which the Socialists regained some of their lost seats, but the non-Socialist parties gained still more, and both the Communists and Fascists lost ground. The following figures are given with reserve :

Social Democrats .....	131
Nationalists .....	103
Centre .....	69
People's Party .....	51
Communists.....	45
Democrats .....	32
Bavarian People's Party ..	19
Bavarian Peasant League ..	17
Fascists .....	14

FRANCE.—Though the French Socialists declared themselves resolutely opposed to war, while the question was in the balance, they joined their countrymen whole-heartedly, and with few exceptions, to fight for France when the moment came,

and issued a manifesto in support of the Government. They were no doubt influenced by the conduct of the German Socialists previously described. More than that, they authorised M. Thomas to join the Government in the spring of 1915. Presently, it is true, an anti-war section raised its head, and sent representatives to the Zimmerwald meeting in the autumn of that year, but they were few, and carried no more influence than their counterparts in this country. When the war was over the party, which had sunk to very small proportions, revived, and resumed the former attitude of aloofness and independence as a party; but they suffered a severe set-back in 1919, when a general election was held, and their members in the Chamber of Deputies were reduced from 96 to 65, partly through bad luck. In the Senate they increased their numbers from 4 to 9. The Radical Socialists suffered still more, and dropped from 166 to 86 in the Chamber. About two-thirds of the Socialist deputies belong to the bourgeoisie, as in Germany. At a congress held at Strasbourg in 1920 the party was re-organised, and its programme modified in the direction of moderation and reform. Violence was repudiated, and a list of immediate electoral and industrial reforms adopted. The more advanced measures for the reconstruction of society included a capital levy, State monopolies for the production of luxuries, financial partnership of the State in all sufficiently centralised enterprises, socialisation of railways, shipping and mines, water-power, banking and insurance.

But Bolshevism stepped in at this point, with  
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its usual disruptive effect. The Red International had then been formed, and two Left-Wing Frenchmen—Cachin and Frossard—had gone to the congress in Moscow in 1920 to report on it, which they did in the most favourable terms. At a French congress held at Tours in December they moved a resolution in favour of the Red International, which was carried by 3,208 votes to 1,022. This was the response to calls from Moscow and letters from Zinovieff. The result was the formation of a Communist Party and a complete cleavage in French Socialism. The Communist Party was then much larger than the Socialist, being credited with a membership of 130,000 in the Red International, but this has since dwindled to a nominal 50,000. The Socialist Party, which is affiliated to the Hamburg International (L.S.I.), was credited in 1923 with an equal number; but it had a very much larger representation in the French Chamber, where the Communists then mustered only thirteen deputies.

A marked change, however, was effected by the general election which took place in May 1924. The following table gives the results of the two elections in the Chamber of Deputies:

	1919	1924
Republicans of the Left .....	133	92
Conservatives .....	31	11
Progressives .....	130	} 127
Liberals .....	72	
Radicals .....	60	34
Republican Socialists .....	27	39
Unified Socialists .....	68	101
Dissident Socialists (Communists) ....	6	29

All the earlier groups on the list, representing the more conservative elements, lost heavily, while the three at the bottom, representing various grades of Socialism, gained—in sum a general move towards Socialism, but rather of the Centre than the extreme Left.

Outside the Parliamentary parties lies Syndicalism, which is the most distinctive feature of the Labour movement in France, and it emerged very strong after the war. In 1919 the General Confederation of Labour held a congress at Lyons, in which over 2,000 syndicates, representing more than two million members, took part. It was by far the largest meeting of the kind that had been held in France up to that time, and it formulated the aims of Syndicalism more clearly than before. It declared the claim of Labour to complete supremacy because 'the other factors of society are only subordinate or parasitic,' and demanded the socialisation of transport, mines, water-power and banks, as the Socialists did. But these and other economic enterprises were to be handed over, not to the State and bureaucratic control, but to industrial syndicates, including the technical staffs, somewhat on the lines of Guild Socialism, though without national ownership and the further development of national Guildism elaborated by the English Guildists. An attempt was also made to secure more centralised organisation by the establishment of a national committee; but centralisation and discipline are alien to the French nature, which is inherently resistant to authority, and not only do the several industries insist on their autonomy, but also the provincial towns resent anything like

dictation from Paris, as I have said in Part I. When I studied the Syndicalist movement in 1909 I visited nearly all the chief industrial towns, and found this spirit very strong. I was told in St. Etienne, which is one of the most purely industrial centres in France, and has the largest *bourse du travail* outside Paris, that it was almost enough for any proposition to emanate from the capital to ensure local opposition. The strength that comes from real unity is hardly attainable in France for anything less than defence of the country against foreign aggression.

The General Confederation failed to secure it, and was soon reduced to a very low state by the action of the Left Wing, which called a disastrous general strike in 1920 on the initiative of the railwaymen. It completely failed. Many of the railwaymen refused to come out, and other sections were in open resistance on the side of the authorities. The sequel was prosecution and imprisonment of leaders and reduction of the Confederation membership from two millions to half that number. The High Court also ordered the dissolution of the Confederation, which led to its reconstruction and the expulsion of the revolutionary section affiliated to the Red Trade Union International. The upshot was a complete split, as with the Socialist Parties. In 1922 the Left Wing formed a new organisation of its own under the somewhat ironical title of *Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire*, with a nominal membership of 335,000. The parent body, which decisively rejected dealings with Moscow in 1920, joined the Amsterdam International with a nominal membership of 756,000.

**BELGIUM.**—Socialism made some advance in Belgium after the war. A general election in 1921 resulted in the return of 67 Socialist deputies to the Chamber, which represented a considerable increase, but fell well below the Centre (Catholic) Party, which had 80 members; and since they formed a Coalition Ministry with the Liberals, who had 33, the Socialist Party has been in a decided standing minority. The Communist element is very weak in Belgium, and the great bulk of the Socialists are affiliated to the Hamburg International (L.S.I.), as the trade unions are to Amsterdam. No country has been more busily and quietly at work repairing the damage of war and rebuilding economic prosperity.

**DENMARK.**—As already stated, Denmark enjoys the distinction of being one of the three European countries to put a Socialist Administration in office. This followed a general election held in April 1924, at which the Socialist Party secured 55 seats in the Folketing and took the lead, with the Left Party (Liberal), which had 45 seats, in the second place. The gradual rise of the Socialists in Parliamentary strength before the war, from 2 members in 1884 to 32 in 1913, has been narrated in Part I. The next election took place in 1918, under a new and wider franchise, which included women, lowered the voting age and abolished property qualifications in municipal elections. This reform was regarded as a great victory for the Socialists, but the election disappointed them, and resulted in a reduction of the previous majority held by a Radical-Socialist Coalition over the other parties. They gained a few seats in the Folketing, increasing

the number from 32 to 39, but it was in an enlarged Chamber, and the Opposition parties gained still more. The Socialist percentage of the total votes polled showed a slight fall from 29·6 to 28·5, which was attributed to the women's vote.

The Radical Ministry continued in power in coalition with the Socialists, but the diminished margin of their majority, which had shrunk from 12 to 4, stimulated the Opposition, which had a distinct majority in the Landsting (Upper Chamber), to show fight. Accordingly in 1920 they demanded a dissolution of Parliament, and a period of great constitutional confusion followed, in which there was no Government at all for one day and several changes of Ministry. The trade unions, which have always had a peculiarly close connection with the Socialists in Denmark, as previously explained, took a hand in affairs by declaring a general strike in collusion with the Socialist Party; and the possibility of a revolution faced the country. It was averted by the action of the Copenhagen City Council under Herr Stauning, the distinguished Socialist leader, who had held office in the Radical Government. They went to the King and urged the dismissal of the existing provisional Ministry. The King complied, and the strike was called off, though the Left Wing elements, and particularly the transport workers, declined to obey the order, and continued on strike. The result of this was a marked reaction against the Socialists and Radicals at the election that followed; they lost 13 seats, and turned a majority of 4 into a minority of 22. At a second election held in the same year they did a little better, and reduced the Opposition majority

to 15. This, however, was enough to enable the Conservative-Liberal Coalition to remain in office until the election in 1924. The following table shows the changes :

	1920		1924
Liberals .....	51	....	45
Conservatives ..	30	....	28
Radicals .....	18	....	20
Socialists .....	48	....	55
German .....	1	....	1

It will be seen that the changes were not great according to our notions. The Liberal-Conservatives dropped from 81 to 73, and the Radical-Socialists rose from 66 to 75. The former obviously could not continue, and it fell to the Socialists, as the largest party, to form a Ministry, with the support of the Radicals ; but the position is precarious.

The Danish Socialists have a reformist Marxian programme, but they are hardly in a position to realise much of it. The most striking move they have made is for the abolition of the Navy. Bolshevism is very weak in Denmark.

SWEDEN.—In 1911, when the Socialist members in the Lower House rose from 33 to 64, they also gained 12 seats in the Upper House, and in consequence the Prime Minister (Staaft) offered them three places in his Ministry, which were declined, as previously related. During the war they increased their Parliamentary strength, and in 1917 emerged the strongest party in the Second Chamber, with 86 members, to whom must be added 16 members in the First Chamber, for in Sweden the

two Chambers hold joint sessions. Nor was this all the change, for a new and more extreme Socialist group had been formed, and it secured 11 members in the Second Chamber. The result of this was coalition with the Liberals, who were the next largest party with 62 members in the Second Chamber, and the formation of a Ministry which included 4 Socialists for the first time. There followed a large measure of franchise reform, including women's suffrage, which came into operation in 1921. In the meantime the Socialists had in 1919 become the strongest party in the First Chamber also, so that they had altogether 149 members in Parliament; and in 1920 a Socialist Government was formed under Dr. Branting—the first to take office constitutionally in Europe.

But it was a minority Government, and did not last long. They lost 10 seats in the Second Chamber at an election later in the same year (1920), and the Liberals refused to support them. This reverse was attributed to fears of nationalisation. In 1921 another election took place, and the Socialists again increased their strength. The position of parties was then as follows:

	Second Chamber	First Chamber
Socialists .....	99	52
Moderates .....	62	44
Agrarian.....	21	17
Liberals .....	41	36
Communists ....	7	1

The result was that the Socialists, being much the largest party in both Chambers, again took

office, though in a minority of 18 in the Second Chamber and of 62 in the joint sessions. In these circumstances they naturally approached the practical problem of realising Socialist ideals in a very cautious manner by appointing committees of investigation. Besides being in a minority, they were not united, being divided into Right and Left Wings. The division existed before the war, as stated in Part I, but it has been accentuated by Bolshevism. In 1917 the more revolutionary Young Socialists formed a separate party under Bolshevist influence, and in 1919 they became affiliated to the Moscow International; but they are a comparatively small and dwindling body.

NORWAY.—The same division exists in Norway, and caused a complete rupture in 1920; but Bolshevism is much stronger there, and the balance between Right and Left Wings is reversed. The Communists in 1922 secured 29 seats in the Storting against 8 held by the Socialists. The result of this revolutionary tendency has been to stimulate opposition and place Socialism in a very weak position. The parties in the Storting stood thus in 1924 :

Conservatives and Moderate Liberals . . . .	57
Liberals . . . . .	37
Communists . . . . .	29
Agriculturals . . . . .	17
Socialists . . . . .	8
Democrats . . . . .	2

FINLAND.—A particular interest attaches to Finland on account of the exceptional strength attained there by Socialism before the war, and



because of its relations with Bolshevist Russia. The mock-democratic centralised system of Bolshevism was naturally antipathetic to a people so intelligent and independent as the Finns, and in 1918 they declared their independence of Russia ; nor did all the efforts of the Bolsheviks to force or persuade them to submit to Moscow avail to overcome their resistance. But the attempt weakened and divided the Socialists. The state of parties at the general election in 1922 was as follows :

Socialists .....	53
Agrarian.....	45
Finnish Coalition Party .....	35
Socialist Labour Party .....	27
Swedish Party .....	25
Finnish Progressive Party .....	15

The internal intrigues of the Moscow Government compelled the Finns to take strong measures by this suppression of Communist literature and the imprisonment of agitators.

ITALY.—No country outside Russia has gone through a more stormy time since the war than Italy. Revolutionary tendencies of every kind have always found a home there, and from the first a strong movement in that direction revealed itself. At a Congress of the Socialist Party held in September 1918 the Left Wing secured a large majority, and at the general election in 1919 the Socialists doubled their strength by returning 156 members. But it was not until 1920 that the after-effects of the war took a violent turn. It has been observed in Part I\* that during the second phase of Socialism the theory of Anarchism, taught by

Bakunin, found a particularly congenial soil in Italy, and that, later, Syndicalism, which is the offspring of Anarchism out of Trade Unionism, took root there more firmly than anywhere else outside France, which was its birthplace. These ferments caused a violent eruption in the autumn of 1920, when the workmen rose in the industrial towns of North Italy and seized works, factories and houses by force. The Communistic Left Wing was then at the zenith of its strength and under the influence of Moscow, where the Italian section of the Communist International was credited with a membership of 70,000. Zinovieff sent from the Congress sitting in September a special message of encouragement to the Italian proletariat, urging them to greater efforts, and warning them that they would be defeated unless they proceeded to a general armed revolution and set up Soviets. The Socialist Party were opposed to this movement, but quite helpless to check it, as were the Government and the other political parties, and a state of anarchy ensued until Fascism came to the front and took a hand in affairs.

This remarkable movement is the most novel and distinctive feature of the after-war period next to Bolshevism, of which it is an antagonistic counterpart, and, like Bolshevism, it is the creation of a remarkable personality—Benito Mussolini. Himself a son of the people, he possesses a profound knowledge of the psychology of his countrymen and great force of character. To these he owes his success. Though he began life as a workman, he had received a good education, which he improved by self-study, and eventually he became a journalist,

like Leroux and Proudhon, who had trod the same path so many years before. He appears to have inherited a revolutionary bent from his father, who was a local agitator, and from an early age he was an active member of the extreme Left Wing of Socialism, with a strong leaning towards direct action and violence. He was constantly in conflict with the authorities. In Switzerland, where he went to work, he was expelled from one canton after another for agitation, and later from Austria for the same reason. Back in Italy in 1910, he was condemned to a year's imprisonment on account of his revolutionary activities and the publication of a newspaper called *The Class War*. From 1912 to 1914 he edited the Socialist newspaper *Avanti*, and when the war broke out he was all for abstention, like the Italian Socialists in general. In November 1915, however, he turned completely round, became patriotic, and in a new paper called the *Popolo d'Italia* strongly advocated the intervention of Italy in the war. For this he was expelled from the Socialist Party, which only made him more determined to follow his own course. From that time he became an ardent supporter of the national cause, joined the Army, fought and was wounded.

When the war came to an end he had lost all belief in International Socialism, and looked to the patriotic ex-Service men to save Italy from the internal distractions that threatened to tear her to pieces, and with which the political parties were unable to cope. In 1919 he founded the '*Fasci Italiani di Combattimento*,' which is perhaps best rendered by, 'Italian League of ex-Service men,' though it has also the sense of 'direct action.'

The word *Fasci* is derived from the old Latin and means literally 'bundles.' The immediate success of this organisation, which was not confined to ex-Service men, but included various elements, showed that he had rightly gauged the national feeling. In May 1920 a national assembly of Fascisti was held in Milan, at which the aims and objects of the League were formulated and unanimously adopted. They repudiated any immediate intention of forming a new political party, and disclaimed the adoption of any specific formulas and dogmas. Their aims were essentially realistic, and equally removed from the abstract theories and immutable dogmas of Socialism and from the impotent stagnation of the older political parties. The chief objects they had immediately in view were vindication of the national war, realisation of the victory, resistance and opposition to the degenerate forms of Socialism, both theoretical and practical, which were summed up in the word 'Bolshevism.'

They proceeded to restore order by meeting force with force, threw the Communists out of the works and houses they had seized, and generally overawed them. Public approval was shown by the results of a general election in May 1921, when the parties were returned in the following order:

Constitutionalists .....	275
Socialists .....	122
Catholics .....	107
Communists .....	16
Republicans .....	7
Germans.....	4
Slavs .....	4

An anarchist outrage in the previous March, when 20 people were killed and 100 wounded by a bomb exploded in the Diana Theatre, Milan, greatly stimulated the reaction against anarchy, and favoured the Fascist movement as the only effective means of combating it. The Fascisti now proceeded to organise as a political party, which grew with great rapidity under the influence of the events mentioned. In 1922 they held a congress, at which 40,000 Fascisti paraded in military formation and in the uniform they had adopted, of which a black shirt was the most distinctive feature. In October of that year, Mussolini was asked to form a Ministry, and did so, himself becoming Premier and Foreign Secretary. That his policy met with general approval was shown in the following year by a vote of confidence carried in the Chamber by 231 to 83 votes, and still more by the general election under a new electoral law in April 1924, when the parties were returned in the following order (*The Times*, April 9, 1924) :

Fascisti and Fascist List .....	364
Socialists and Communists .....	65
Populars.....	40
Giolittian Democrats .....	17
Social Democrats .....	11
Constitutional Opposition .....	12
Republicans .....	7
Other Groups .....	9

Under the Fascist administration internal order had been restored, strikes reduced by 90 per cent., national finance raised and stabilised, and relations with foreign countries placed on an orderly and

firm footing. All this had been accomplished by the resolute employment of force under a virtual dictatorship, which is, however, undeniably at variance with the democratic spirit of the age, and unsuited to more law-abiding peoples. The Fascisti had been organised into a 'national militia,' or armed police, which suppressed opposition in an arbitrary manner, and many acts of violence had been committed on both sides. Mussolini, who styled himself '*Il Duce*'—'The Leader, who goes before and does not follow'—had become a confessed autocrat, and of all living men the most obnoxious to the Socialists, whom he had reduced to impotence. But instead of railing at him, it would be wiser for them to recognise that they have to thank the excesses of the Communists and their own Left Wing for what has happened. And that lesson applies to other countries.

Nevertheless, the position in Italy was very unstable. The dictatorship had justified itself by results for the time being, but it could not last indefinitely, and, in spite of the election in May, opposition gathered strength in many quarters during 1924. It was greatly stimulated by the assassination of Matteoti, a leading Socialist and editor of the principal Socialist paper, in the autumn. Accusations against Mussolini and the reign of force multiplied rapidly, and revealed a widespread reaction, which led to an acute crisis at the end of the year. Mussolini overcame it for the moment, but the future depends on his political sagacity. If he can gradually transform his Executive, and bring his policy into line with the march of democracy, he will stand out as the saviour of

Italy in her hour of need. If not, he will go down.

AUSTRIA.—The break-up of the Austrian Empire, which immediately followed the war, reduced Austria proper to a minor State of comparatively small importance. After the abdication of the Emperor on November 12, 1918, a provisional Socialist Government was formed under the premiership of Dr. Karl Renner, a prominent representative of Reformist Socialism; but at the elections held for a Constituent Assembly in 1919 the Socialists were in a minority, though they formed the largest party, with 74 members against 64 'Christian Socialists' and 24 Liberals. In 1920 a new constitution was adopted, and the Christian Socialists became the largest party. A period of instability followed, but after the experiment of a non-party administration in 1921 a Government of Christian Socialists, supported by the Pan-German Party, was formed in 1922. Since then the country has been peacefully and successfully at work, with foreign financial assistance, recovering from the extreme economic depression to which it had been reduced. But Socialism in the strict sense has made no advance.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.—Of the new States formed out of the Austrian Empire the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia is the most important. It declared its independence of Austria in October 1918, and set up a Republic under the presidency of Professor Masaryk, who has held office ever since. The National Assembly consists of two Chambers elected by universal adult suffrage. From the first the Socialists have been in a minority. In the election of 1919 they secured 136 seats against 145 held

by the National Parties, 102 by the Czecho-Slovaks, 37 by the Germans and 10 by the Magyars and Magyar-Germans, representing that part of Hungary included in the new State. The enormous number of Communists (360,000) with which it was credited at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920 seems to indicate a strong Communist movement, but if there was one, nothing came of it, and the Czecho-Slovak delegates made no show at the Congress. They seem to be even more divided than in other countries. In 1924 their nominal membership had dwindled to about one-third ; nor are the Right Wing Socialists more united. In any case, Czecho-Slovakia has been comparatively peaceful and busy since its foundation. The country is rich in natural resources and in a vigorous and practical population ; its economic life is well developed and balanced between agriculture, industry and mining ; and with internal peace it is well on the road to prosperity, though it has experienced a period of depression and much unemployment.

HUNGARY.—The fate of Hungary has been very different. It suffered the penalty of defeat along with Austria, and was greatly reduced in size by the transfer of large slices of territory to its neighbours. It became a Republic in November 1918, but had for years a stormy career, both at home and abroad. It is chiefly interesting in the present connection, because it is the only country outside Russia which at one time installed, or allowed to be installed, a Bolshevist Government. This happened in March 1919, when Bela Kun, a Jewish agitator, seized the reins of administration at



Budapest in the name of a Hungarian Soviet. He was turned out after a few months by Rumanian troops, which occupied Budapest, and a Socialist Government was set up for a few days, only to make way for a Conservative administration under the Archduke Joseph, who accepted the office of President, but resigned it again at the instance of the Supreme Council in Paris. In 1920 Admiral Horthy was elected Governor by the National Assembly, with quasi-monarchical privileges and a position somewhat resembling that of the Palatine before Hungary became a kingdom under the Austrian Emperor. Socialism appears to be at a low ebb in this unfortunate country, which has had repeated trouble with its neighbours and been in a very depressed state.

The story of the other newly-created States in regard to Socialism is somewhat similar to that of Czecho-Slovakia. It is natural that these States, being new and themselves the product of revolution, should be mainly occupied with their national security and problems of internal organisation, and should be disinclined for revolutionary economic experiments. Poland, which became an independent Republic in November 1918, was cured of any inclination in that direction by the attempt of Soviet Russia in 1919 to force Bolshevism upon them at the point of the bayonet. There is a Communist Party, but it is small and illegal; Socialism of the Right Wing is stronger, and affiliated to the Hamburg International. But the movement is altogether weak, and the same may be said of the new Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In Yugo-Slavia, which is a kingdom, unlike the

other new States, Communism appears to be stronger than Socialism. In 1922 the strength of the party affiliated to the Moscow International was returned at 80,000, but very little information is obtainable about it.

Elsewhere the Socialist movement has either undergone very little change, as in Switzerland, Holland, Spain and the United States, or is very young, as in the East and South America. We come to the British Empire, which is the most important of all, because at home Great Britain is the first of the Great Powers to have installed a Labour Government, and because of the remarkable position occupied by Australia. It therefore calls for fuller notice.

GREAT BRITAIN.—The war had a very disruptive effect on Socialism in Great Britain. From the outset the great bulk of the British Labour leaders, and with them the Labour Party as a whole, behaved like their comrades in France, Germany, Belgium and the other belligerent countries. They took up the cause of their country, and supported the Government; some of them joined it. But of the Socialists more stood aloof or were definitely opposed to the war than in any of the other countries engaged. In particular the Independent Labour Party took this line, and they were treated by the authorities with a leniency unknown elsewhere. That singular and purely English contrivance for evading the law without violating it known as 'conscientious objection' was extended, for their benefit, from compulsory vaccination to compulsory war service. In the pacific attitude the assumed devotion to the principles of Socialism was less in evidence than

concern for Germany. If they had had their way, France and Belgium would have been left to the mercy of militarist Germany, and the rule of the War Lord would have been not only fixed more firmly than before in Germany, but would have been established over the whole of Western Europe, a consummation hardly conducive to the progress of Socialism. The result was that the I.L.P. incurred great unpopularity, and suffered a decline in membership. The British Socialist Party (formerly Social Democratic Federation) fared still worse, being split in two. The leader, Hyndman, and the paper *Justice*, took a strong patriotic line, but a division of opinion developed within the Society until a rupture became inevitable, and the patriotic section broke away in 1916 to form the National Socialist Party. This division is of interest, because the other section, which retained the old title, gradually took on a purely revolutionary character, and eventually merged its identity in the Communist Party, when that was formed in 1921.

No British Socialists took part in the international meetings, already described, of 1915, 1916 and 1917, at which the foundations of international Bolshevism were laid; and the movement as a whole was compulsorily quiescent. But the ferment was continually at work and gathering strength. It revealed itself in 1917 at the miscellaneous meeting held in Leeds to celebrate the first Russian Revolution, when the repressed excitement broke out in an enthusiastic reception of Kerensky and a resolution to form Soviets in this country. The proposal indicated a wildly excited, not to say delirious, state of mind, and is worth

recalling, both for that reason and also because the incident, which took place several months before the Bolshevist Revolution, proves the prior existence of Russian Soviets, which are generally identified with Bolshevism. The revolutionary ferment working under the surface had revealed itself long before in the industrial field by the development of the syndicalist tendencies embodied in the shop stewards' and works committees' movement, which began on the Clyde in 1915 under the influence of the extreme revolutionary society called the Socialist Labour Party, which had its seat in Glasgow, and later joined the British Socialist Party to form the Communist Party. Another move reflecting, though less clearly, the same spirit was the Triple Alliance of Miners', Railwaymen's and Transport Workers' Unions, consummated at the end of 1915. This combination, originally projected in 1913 in consequence of the great coal strike of the previous year, may be regarded as a threat of political coercion by 'direct action' analogous to the general strike, which is not only the chief weapon in the armoury of Syndicalism but has repeatedly been applied to political purposes in several continental countries—Russia, Finland, Sweden, Belgium and others. The abortive attempt made in 1921 to use the Triple Alliance for this purpose on behalf of the miners revealed its character and also its weakness.

All these signs, and others that need not be enumerated, pointed to great disturbance and large changes after the war. It was so obvious that in 1917 I predicted what has since happened, and called it *The Coming Revolution*, including the

advent of a Labour Government, though the prevailing expectation was to the exact contrary. Most people looked for a tranquil, happy, prosperous time, with less work, more pay, and more play, and the determined attempt by all classes to realise that impossible expectation has greatly increased and prolonged the inevitable difficulties of economic recovery. There was no reason for the expectation except the mere wish ; all the real evidence was to the contrary. But people would not see it, and general disappointment, for which parties and classes blamed each other, enhanced old antagonisms, and played an appreciable part in shaping affairs. Such were the principal elements and influences at work during the war.

Before it came to an end several important changes bearing on the Socialist movement had taken place. The largest of these was the Representation of the People Act, 1918. It was a great measure of franchise reform, which at one sweep added eight million electors to the roll, of whom six million were women. Thus female suffrage, which had been so bitterly fought in preceding years, was granted almost without opposition, though with a higher age qualification than for male suffrage—30 years instead of 21—and some other slight disadvantages. The change of attitude was largely due to the varied, efficient and ungrudging service given by women during the war. The Act, which came into operation in time for the general election of 1918, in itself amounted to a constitutional revolution ; but it did not satisfy the Labour Party, which in 1920 endeavoured to place men and women on a complete electoral equality. The extension

of the franchise naturally added largely to the Labour Party's poll at subsequent elections, and in comparing the later with earlier polls the fact must be remembered ; but the net result has not been altogether so satisfactory to the party as had been expected. The women's vote is an uncertain factor.

Another important change, more directly affecting the Labour movement, took place about the same time. This was the adoption in February 1918 of a new constitution by the Labour Party. The party had previously consisted, as already explained, of a combination of Socialist societies, trade unions and local trades councils ; and the object of the new move was to make it a more general political party by throwing open the membership to persons not belonging to any of those organisations. The objects of the party were formulated as follows :

#### NATIONAL

(a) To organise and maintain in Parliament and in the country a political Labour Party, and to ensure the establishment of a local Labour Party in every country constituency and every Parliamentary borough, with suitable divisional organisations in the separate constituencies of divided boroughs.

(b) To co-operate with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress or other kindred organisations in joint political or other action in harmony with the party constitution and standing orders.

(c) To give effect as far as may be practicable

to the principles from time to time approved by the Party Conference.

(d) To ensure for the producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service.

(e) Generally to promote the political, social and economic emancipation of the people, and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.

#### INTER-DOMINION

(f) To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in the Dominions and the Dependencies, with a view to promoting the purposes of the party, and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries.

#### INTERNATIONAL

(g) To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in other countries and to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of freedom and peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of international disputes by conciliation or judicial arbitration,

and for such international legislation as may be practicable.

It is an interesting document, about as far removed from Marxism as words can make it. The hand of the Fabian is over it all. It is only in paragraph (d), which mentions the common ownership of the means of production, that Socialism in any definite sense comes in at all, and then it takes the vague form of a 'basis.' But the most novel point is the phrase 'producers by hand or brain,' which is emphasised by repetition in the next clause. It is evidently intended to broaden the current meaning of the word 'labour,' but to what extent and for what purpose is not at all clear. If it includes all workers by brain as distinguished from non-workers, then the line of demarcation is drawn between earned and unearned incomes, which would take us back to the Saint Simonians, who made that distinction their central economic principle. But the words 'producers' and 'industry' suggest limitation to those directly engaged in production, which would include the salaried staff, technicians, etc., and may be a concession to the guild idea, but would exclude the leaders of the Labour Party and its purely intellectual supporters. Perhaps no exact meaning is intended. In any case, in proportion as the declared scope of the Party is widened, its claim to represent a particular class is less and less justifiable. Political parties are distinguished by differences of opinion, principle and policy, not of occupation or status, and the Labour Party has necessarily taken on that character as it has broadened into a general



party, which is on the same footing as the others, and includes members from every class and occupation. Anyone who subscribes to the principle—peer, capitalist, employer, millionaire—is reckoned a Labour man.

Taken as a whole, the new constitution marked a distinct advance towards Socialism as compared with the pre-war position, which sedulously avoided any formal declaration of adherence to Socialism as a condition of affiliation. This reticence was not due to any doubt about the real policy and objective of the Party, but was adopted in deference to the susceptibilities of the trade unions, and the change may be taken to indicate a movement on their part towards the Left. Such a change has undoubtedly taken place, and, together with the opening of the membership to individuals and local groups not belonging to Socialist or trade union organisations, it conduced to a rapid growth of the Party. The total membership in 1914 was 1,612,147; in 1918 it had risen to 3,013,129, and then to 4,359,807 in 1920, which was the high-water mark. The rise was mainly due to the increase of trade union membership, which reached its highest point (4,317,537) in 1920; but the number of local Labour Party groups had also increased rapidly in consequence of the new constitution. From 179 in 1914 they rose to 389 in 1918 and to 492 in 1920. The Socialist societies, on the other hand, fell off heavily after 1918, when they were credited with an aggregate membership of 52,720, and declined year by year to 31,760 in 1922. This seems to have been due mainly to the disruption caused by Bolshevism, which led to many

defections and the eventual formation of the Communist Party.

Broadly speaking, the Labour Party gradually and progressively extended its influence after the war, in spite of numerical fluctuations ; and it did so in two ways—by penetrating into fresh localities and into fresh social quarters. Systematic propaganda, by the written and the spoken word, carried it far and wide among the people, to whom it offered attractive promises, and who were more disposed by the general upheaval to listen than before. At the same time economic conditions stimulated a new spirit of inquiry in more educated circles. Socialism became a fashion, particularly among young men and women of intellectual pretensions. Hence its vogue at the older Universities, which always take up the current cult of the day. In my time I was as much interested in Labour questions as I am now, through personal friendship with workmen and personal experience of their work, aided by the study of Carlyle, Charles Kingsley and Mill ; but I met no one else who was. The intellectual cult was then æstheticism ; to-day it is Socialism. So, too, the Church ; or, rather, a section of the clergy, who are always susceptible to the idols of the forum.

So the ranks of the Labour Party not only grew, but gathered recruits from new quarters and sympathisers from still wider circles. The greatest advance took place after 1918, as the following table of successive elections clearly shows. The earlier ones have already been given in Part I ; but for the sake of completeness I will repeat them here. The figures, which may not agree

precisely with those given elsewhere, are taken from the *Daily Herald* of November 9, 1924. The poll for 1924 was not then quite complete.

LABOUR PARTY (INCLUDING CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERS)

Year	Seats Contested	Votes Polled	Members Elected
1900 ..	15	62,698	2
1906 ..	50	323,196	29
1910 (Jan.)	78	505,690	40
1910 (Dec.)	56	370,802	42
1918 ..	361	2,244,000	57
1922 ..	414	4,236,000	142
1923 ..	427	4,348,000	191
1924 ..	514	5,551,000	150

The huge increase of the poll in 1918 was due chiefly to the enlarged electorate and the increased number of candidates put up; but the further advance of two millions in 1922 cannot be ascribed to either cause. The electorate was nearly the same, and the number of seats contested not much greater. The party had evidently gained a great deal of ground in popular favour during the interval. This was doubtless due mainly to disappointment with the old parties and the Coalition, and to resentment on account of the economic depression, reductions of wages, unemployment and more or less

abortive strikes, culminating in the great coal dispute of 1921 and the breakdown of the Triple Alliance in connection with it. The failure of industrial struggles on an unprecedented scale, both constitutional and of a revolutionary character (of which there were several), turned men's thoughts more to the political field.

The increase of voting strength since 1922 seems to be largely due to the number of seats contested. It was small between 1922 and 1923, when only 13 more candidates were run; between 1922 and 1924 it was large, but 100 more seats were contested, which brought in half a million more votes. If these are deducted from the total increase, the net gain was 700,000, which not only shows no sign of declining favour, but suggests an unknown reserve of potential strength. The Labour Party, whose heads had been a little turned by their success in 1923, were disappointed with the results in 1924; but that was because they expected too much. A dispassionate looker-on might well conclude that they had more reason to be satisfied than the contrary. They had been put to the test of office, and, though the time of trial was short—between eight and nine months—to have emerged without loss of support is itself ground for at least a negative satisfaction; for it is office that tries out the reins and the heart of political parties and leads to reaction. There was a reaction, and it turned them out of office, but it took effect, not in diminishing their electoral strength, but in increasing that of the Conservatives; that is to say, the diminution was relative, not absolute. To show the position more clearly it is necessary to state the

relative strength of parties in the last three elections, which cover the rise and fall of the Labour Party ; and since this is the most outstanding event, apart from Russia, in the present phase of Socialism, no apology is needed for entering into details. The story is recent and familiar in this country, but it may not be so to all readers. The following table gives the figures as nearly as can be ascertained, though other calculations may show some small discrepancies :

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

PARTIES	YEAR					
	1922		1923		1924	
	Votes	Mem- bers	Votes	Mem- bers	Votes	Mem- bers
Conservative	5,383,896	347	5,359,690	258	7,385,927	413
Labour	4,236,733	142	4,348,379	191	5,555,470	150
Liberal	4,185,292	118	4,251,573	157	2,905,035	39
Others	375,510	8	226,796	9	281,050	12

It will be seen that the election of 1922 brought the Labour Party into the position of the second strongest party in the House of Commons, and consequently it became the official Opposition in accordance with constitutional usage. This was the first great change, and it excited much public interest ; but the party was still far below the Conservatives, who had a substantial majority over all the others combined. In 1923 the Labour Party not only maintained the second position, but considerably increased their strength in the House, and

—what was more important—approached much more nearly to the Conservatives, who lost heavily, and no longer commanded a majority, though still the largest party. This was largely a matter of luck, as the voting had changed little; but the Liberals, who had also gained on the Conservatives, and believed their star to be in the ascendant, resolved to join with the Labour Party to turn the Conservatives out, and did. The result was that the Labour Party, being the second in size and the official Opposition, was asked to form a Ministry in accordance with constitutional usage, and accepted the invitation.

That is how a Socialist Government came into office in Great Britain. It was not only a minority Government, dependent on the support of the Liberals, as in Sweden and Denmark; but, unlike those two cases, it was formed by a party which was not even the largest. It is intelligible and in order, when no party has a majority and there is no coalition, that the task of forming a Ministry should fall to the numerically largest party; that it should be handed over to one in a secondary position, commanding some 70 votes less in the Lower House and in a hopeless minority in the Upper, is anomalous. It was, in fact, an act of caprice on the part of the Liberals, who put the Socialists in either to gratify their feelings against the Conservatives or to keep the place warm for themselves till the next general election or other favourable opportunity, when they might aspire to fill it.

The election of 1924 was an ironical but just verdict on this manoeuvre. It brought back the

Conservatives with an absolute majority over all parties combined, more than twice as large as that of 1922, and at the same time it reduced the Liberals to insignificance. The Socialists increased their poll, as we have already seen, but the Conservatives increased theirs a great deal more, while the Liberals dropped just about as many as the Socialists gained. It seems clear that the chief effect on the electorate of the Socialist Administration was to stimulate a very large number of electors who had abstained from voting or had voted for Liberals in the previous election to cast their suffrages for the Conservatives in a contest in which the issue had, in effect, become one of For or Against Socialism. The two million additional votes cast for the Conservatives over their previous poll—not only of 1923 but also of 1922—cannot be explained as other than an expression of strong disapproval of what had happened in 1924, which was nothing else but the Administration of Mr. MacDonald; and this disapproval fell on the Liberals because they had put him in office.

It is necessary for a correct interpretation of public opinion about Socialism to determine, if possible, why this first tentative experiment created so massive a reaction. What was it in the MacDonald Administration that was so strongly resented? It could not have been failure to fulfil the lavish promises made by the Labour Party at the election of 1923, because that would have taken effect mainly on those who voted for the party on account of the promises, and would have been expressed in a withdrawal of support, whereas support was increased. The failure, which could

not be denied, particularly in regard to unemployment, was evidently condoned, probably on the ground that the party was in office but not in power, and therefore unable to do what it wished. This effective plea, which is unanswerable, was constantly urged, with the obvious corollary: 'Put us in power and then you will see.' As for opponents and doubters, they expected failure, and its occurrence would not move them to any marked demonstration. It may therefore be put aside as an explanation.

What else was there? The mere fact of a Socialist Administration was received very calmly by the public, who had for years seen Labour members in the Government and lately the Labour Party itself acting as the official Opposition. The approach had been gradual; there was no shock, and a general disposition to give the Labour Party a reasonable chance was shown in many ways. The other parties in Parliament fell in with it, and treated the newcomers with a consideration which the Labour Party had never shown to them or they to each other in peace-time. Nor did the principal positive acts of the Ministry, which were the Budget and foreign policy, arouse much condemnation. On the contrary, both were generally praised rather more than they deserved. Public opinion was unfavourably impressed by the occasional truculence of some of the Scottish members, but this was transient, and misbehaviour was not confined to them.

On the whole, the Government, who seemed to realise the position and made no attempt to introduce measures of a definitely Socialistic character,



did as well in the eyes of the public as most other Administrations during their first six months of office ; and there was no apparent reason why they should not continue for some time longer at least. Indeed, everybody expected it. What turned the tide of opinion so strongly against them was undoubtedly the series of incidents connected with Bolshevik Russia and the Communist Party at home that occurred in the autumn.

The first was the sudden change of front in regard to the proposed treaties with Russia, involving, among other things, a loan guaranteed by the Government. On August 5 the House of Commons was informed that the negotiations had completely broken down ; on August 6 that the treaties had been signed. The official explanation of the change failed to carry conviction, and the terms of the treaties were severely criticised in all quarters. The whole affair was shrouded in a mysterious obscurity, which inevitably roused suspicion that there had been intervention and pressure brought to bear on the Government. This was followed up by an equally sudden change of front in regard to the prosecution of a Communist named Campbell for seditious writings, at first ordered by the Government and then dropped. Again the official explanation offered was quite inadequate, and at variance with the statements of Campbell himself, of the Communist Party here, and of Zinovieff in Moscow, both of whom boasted of having brought pressure to bear on the Government. It was the refusal of the Government to grant an inquiry into this case that brought about their defeat on October 8. The unfavourable impression created by

these occurrences was deepened by the publication on October 25, a few days before the general election, of a letter headed 'Very Secret,' bearing the signature of Zinovieff and addressed to the British Communist Party under the date of September 15, urging more revolutionary activity and increased pressure on the Government to secure ratification of the treaties.

The Foreign Office decided that this letter was genuine, and after some delay a severe note, drafted by the Prime Minister himself, was addressed in reply to M. Rakovsky, head of the Soviet Legation in London. Both documents were issued to the Press together, but not until a newspaper had threatened to publish the Zinovieff letter, a copy of which had come to hand. Its authenticity was at once denied by the Russian Legation, the Communist Party and the *Daily Herald*, which is the organ of the Labour Party, on the ground of certain alleged discrepancies or incorrect expressions, although they have all occurred in official Soviet publications of unquestionable authenticity. In either case the Government, and particularly the Prime Minister, who was also Foreign Secretary, were placed in a difficulty. If the letter was genuine, Zinovieff, and, through him, the Soviet Government were proved guilty of deliberately violating the formal undertakings they had entered into as a condition for the reception of the Soviet Legation in London and for the treaties they had recently signed. If it was not genuine then a gross blunder had been made and needless affront offered to the Russian representatives. Later a Committee of the Cabinet, after investigation,

failed to reach any conclusion about the genuineness of the letter ; and it is to be noticed that the Soviet Government, while denying its authenticity, did not treat the Foreign Office reply as an affront.

All these incidents had a cumulative effect on the public mind. They wore a secretive and shifty air with more than a suggestion of underhand influence brought to bear on the Government by its own Left Wing supporters in the interest of the Soviet Government and the Communist International, which stand for violent revolution, and are so closely associated as to be indistinguishable. This is quite enough to account for the rally to the Conservative side. People here do not want violent revolution, and nothing is more resented, at least by Englishmen, than the idea of interference with their affairs, and dictation by a foreign body. The first Socialist Administration in this country was thrown on the rocks by its own Left Wing, which is exactly what good judges expected to happen sooner or later, because it always does happen in similar circumstances. Every cause is liable to be wrecked by its extreme advocates, who know no moderation. Just as revolution is provoked by extreme reactionaries, so reaction is provoked by extreme revolutionaries. And therein is a lesson not for the Labour Party only, but for all parties.

The leaders of the Labour Party were clearly aware of the danger from the extravagances of Left Wing Socialism. That is evident from their persistent refusal to have anything to do with the Communist Party. This organisation was formed in January 1921 by the fusion of the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party and sundry other

small revolutionary groups, mostly in Glasgow, in obedience to the orders of the Communist International, to which the British Socialist Party was already affiliated. The united body is the British section of the Communist International, and of course subject to the rules of that organisation, which have been fully dealt with in the previous chapter. Its headquarters are in London, and its chairman is A. McManus. It was said to have a membership of 10,000 in 1921, but at the C.I. Congress in 1922 it was credited with only 5,000, and Zinovieff referred sadly to the very slow progress made by Communism in England. He said that progress was slower there than anywhere else, and he did not understand the reason, but they must pay more attention to England. He has done so, but the membership continued to fall, and was returned in 1924 as only 3,000. On the other hand, they have been very active, and have zealously carried out the instructions of Moscow to form cells, particularly in the trade unions, and to smuggle propaganda into the Army. The prosecution of Campbell turned on that. Nor have they been unsuccessful. Communism has apparently been growing in the trade unions, and particularly in the engineering industry, which has been so severely hit by unemployment. This may be partly the reason, but there seems to be more than that. There has long been a strong tendency to extreme Socialism among the engineers, and they are apt to become leaders, probably through superior education. It is not a new thing; the first trade unionists to become Marxian Socialists were engineers—John Burns and Tom Mann. The

tendency displayed itself during the war, at first on the Clyde and afterwards elsewhere, in the shop stewards' movement, which wore a syndicalist appearance, but was readily adaptable to any revolutionary movement. It seems to have been absorbed into Communism, as some of its leaders are now the most prominent men in the Communist Party and in high favour at Moscow. In August 1924 a 'National Minority Movement' within the trade unions, previously prepared at Moscow, was announced by Tom Mann.

It follows from all this that the Labour Party, though refusing to admit the Communist Party, may yet contain many Communists in its trade union ranks; and it undoubtedly does. A well-known trade union official, representing a very important body, and himself a moderate man recently remarked, 'Half of my crowd are Communists.' The Trades Union Congress, which has worked in close association with the Labour Party since it set up a General Council on a new basis in 1920, appears to have outstripped the Labour Party itself, and to lean much more towards Communism. At the annual congress in 1924 the presidential address was full of class-war and Communistic sentiment, and the question of relations with the Moscow International, though brought forward and noisily debated, was not brought to a direct issue, but evaded in a manner suggestive of divided counsels. A marked contrast to this ambiguous attitude was presented by the Labour Party's Conference which followed shortly after. Three questions were posed and voted on as follows:

(1) Admission of the Communist Party to affiliation :

Against .....	3,185,000
For .....	193,000

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Majority against .. 2,992,000

(2) Endorsement of Communists as Labour candidates :

Against .....	2,456,000
For .....	654,000

Majority against .. 1,802,000

(3) Eligibility of Communists for membership of the Labour Party :

Against .....	1,804,000
For .....	1,540,000

Majority against .. 264,000

The striking features of these ballots are the extremely decisive majority against the affiliation of the Communist Party, which has repeatedly applied for admission ; the smaller but still decisive majority against the recognition of Communists as official candidates ; and the comparatively even voting on the admission of Communists to membership of the Labour Party. The small majority against the last proposal, in striking contrast to the previous votes, confirms the conclusion that the trade unions already contain many Communists,

or at least have a strong current of sympathy with Communism, though still generally opposed to the dictation of Moscow.<sup>1</sup> The word Communism must not be taken in this connection to mean any well-defined policy or theory; it signifies rather a general inclination towards a more revolutionary or Left Wing attitude than the official policy of the Labour Party. With the dismissal of the party from office and its return to the function of an Opposition, this may be expected to grow and gather strength. Mr. MacDonald had in the late Parliament two powerful arguments for controlling his Left Wing supporters—the responsibility of office and the lack of power as a minority Government. Even so they were strong enough to impose on him a course at variance with public opinion and probably his own better judgment. In opposition they will be much stronger.

There is irony in the fact that the I.L.P., having captured the trade unions, now finds itself out-bidden in the same field by a more extreme version

<sup>1</sup> The following letter from the Communist Party was published in *The Times*, September 4, 1924: 'We have noticed in the Press various statements about the "Red" attack on the Trades Union Congress. I am directed by the Industrial Section of the Communist Party to make it quite clear. We are working to transform the trades unions from purely pacific organisations into mass organisations for revolutionary activity. This can be done by steady and persistent propaganda, inside the unions themselves, and results justify our claim. At the recent "minority movement" congress there were 270 delegates representing 200,000 revolutionary trades unionists; and, further, we have secured a notable victory in the election of Comrade Cook as secretary of the Miners' Federation. We will receive opposition from the present reactionary leaders of Labour, but with the inculcation of the unions with Communist propaganda and the establishment of revolutionary nuclei we will gradually be able to weed out those leaders who are enemies of the proletariat, and then we will be in the position to throw out a final challenge to the forces of capitalism, and the class war, instead of being a slogan will be a fact.'

of its own doctrine, and in danger of being driven where it would not go, or, at least, faster than it wishes. The Industrial Workers' Charter, formally adopted by the Trades Union Congress in September 1924, contains a much more definite, precise and summary programme of Socialism than the proposals set out by the I.L.P. in 1923. It demands the nationalisation of land, mines, minerals and railways, the extension of State and municipal enterprise for the provision of social necessities and services, participation of workers in the control of industry and its management, a 44-hour week, a legal minimum wage, provision of adequate maintenance of the unemployed, with training centres for juveniles and adults, proper and adequate housing accommodation for the people, full educational facilities provided by the State from the elementary schools to the universities, adequate maintenance and compensation in respect of industrial accidents and diseases, State pensions for all at the age of sixty, and pensions for widowed mothers and dependent children. None of the items are new, but they have never been put forward in this form before.

One general reflection is suggested by a review of the British Labour movement in recent years. Once a great pioneer and a model for other countries, it has lost all initiative and become an imitator and a hanger-on, tied to one foreign organisation or another. The Labour Party has rejected Moscow but tied itself to Hamburg; the Trades Union Congress has fought shy of the Red International but surrendered itself to Amsterdam, where it plays second fiddle to Germany's lead. The only



original idea contributed by this country for a long time is Guild Socialism, and that did not come from within, nor was it really original; but it deserves notice.

It was a hybrid between State Socialism and Syndicalism, first put forward by intellectual theorists in 1906. The idea was to combine the State ownership of industries with their control by the persons engaged in them, organised in guilds, which would include the technical staffs. The idea is ingenious and it attracted much favourable attention. It was gradually developed on paper into a system of national guilds, and in 1915 a National Guilds League was founded. In 1920 an energetic attempt was made to create and work building guilds, at first in Manchester, and later in London and elsewhere, and for a time it seemed a promising venture. They were not guilds according to plan, because there was no State ownership, and the technicians—architects—were not included, but were engaged on the ordinary professional footing; but the attempt went some way towards realising the guild idea, and exerted a good deal of sympathetic interest, to which I contributed in a humble way. The initial success, however, did not last, and presently the building guilds sank out of sight again. Some were formed on a smaller scale in several other industries, but they do not seem to have met with success, as nothing has been heard about them. My own opinion is that there is still vitality in the idea, and that it will be revived, but in a different form and on a different basis.

AUSTRALIA.—Before the war Australia stood out as the country in which Socialism was politically

farther advanced than in any other. The Commonwealth and three of the State legislatures had Labour Governments, as stated in Part I. During the war, into which the Australians threw themselves with historical energy, popular opinion changed, and the Commonwealth Parliament, following the example of the Mother Country, dropped its Socialistic character, and united in a patriotic policy. In 1917 a Coalition Ministry was formed under Mr. Hughes, and all the States supported his policy with the exception of Queensland, which had not a Labour Government when the war began, but installed one in 1915, when compulsory voting was first introduced, and has retained it ever since.

This fact lends a special interest to Queensland, which stands alone. It has had a still longer experience of moderate Socialist administration than Russia has of Bolshevism, and may be regarded as an experimental counterpart of the latter. We will come to the results in a moment. The other Australian Governments can be briefly dismissed. All the six component States, except New South Wales, had in 1924 followed the example of Queensland and installed Labour Governments, but their experience has been too short to afford material for examination. In the Commonwealth Government the Labour Party has been in a minority since 1914, though it has gradually increased its representation at successive elections since the war. At the last one in 1923 it became the largest party in the House of Representatives, with 29 members against 27 Nationalists and 19 Farmers and Liberals. In 1919 a Federal proposal in favour of the nationalisation of monopolies, which had been

brought forward and rejected by a small majority on a referendum in 1913, was again rejected by an increased, though still a rather small, majority. Railways, it should be noted, had always been State-owned in Australia, with insignificant exceptions. Out of 23,497 miles the Federal Government owns 1,733 miles, and the individual States the rest; there are only about 1,000 miles of privately owned railways open to ordinary use. Some railway statistics are given below. As a whole Australia is evidently moving towards Socialism in advance of all others outside Russia, and will in a few years present some very instructive object-lessons. At present that can be said only of Queensland, to which we now turn.

This State had in 1924 enjoyed a Socialist Administration for eight clear years; it should be possible to learn something from the record. The Government has introduced a good many publicly owned enterprises under different departments, in addition to the ordinary public services, and controls a large staff. In June 1923 the population of the State was about 800,000 and the number of persons employed in the State service was 36,000, which is equivalent to nearly two millions in Great Britain. One of the most important departments is that of the Commissioner of Trade, who controls a number of miscellaneous enterprises, including cattle-stations, butchers' shops, fish shops, a cannery, a produce agency, hotel and refreshment-rooms. There were in 1923 fifteen cattle-stations, with 226,000 head of stock, and they had an accumulated debt of £573,000 on an investment of £1,808,000. The butchers' shops, which number 72 and were

acquired during the war at a low price, did very well for a time; but in recent years they have found it difficult to carry on, and the accumulated profits had dwindled in 1923 to £1,702. The produce agency, which was installed to deal with farmers' produce direct and to eliminate middlemen, had made a net loss of £4,776. The cannery, started in 1920 to can fruits, had made a loss of £54,000. The fish shops had made, since 1917, an accumulated loss of £36,000, and have been given up; the trade has reverted to private enterprise. Were any ventures financially successful? Yes, the hotel, which had made £8,500 since 1917 and the refreshment-rooms, which had netted £30,000. These seem to be the only ones in this department, according to the Auditor-General's official report. The accumulated losses aggregated £627,000, although these State enterprises pay no rates and taxes. The aggregate debt had risen from £1,072,000 in 1919 to £2,214,000 in 1923.

Let us take another department—that of mines, which is also responsible for a number of ventures. The record here is uniformly one of losses, and a brief summary will suffice.

*Coal Mines.*—Three; have absorbed £160,000; loss on the last year's working, £1,275.

*Arsenic Mine.*—Loss on the last year, £1,251; accumulated loss, £7,631.

*Iron and Steel Works.*—Expenditure £49,000; returns nil; abandoned.

*Oil Bore.*—Expenditure £36,790; tools lost in working in 1919, and venture abandoned after failure to recover.

*Ore Batteries.*—Three; accumulated loss, £5,700.

*Smelters.*—Loss, £178,655; debt to Treasury, £711,000, three times greater than in 1920.

*Ore Treatment Works.*—Accumulated loss, £32,664.

The railways are the largest branch of State enterprise, and since practically all of them are owned and operated by the State throughout the Commonwealth, as already stated, they present a wide field for observation and an object-lesson of considerable magnitude. They appear to be run at a continuous loss. The latest official Year Book of the Commonwealth gives statistics for the five years 1918–1922, and during that period each State made a loss every year, with one exception; in 1922 the State of Victoria made a profit of £184,416. The aggregate yearly losses are shown in the following table:

					£
1918	..	..	..	..	1,509,607
1919	..	..	..	..	2,195,576
1920	..	..	..	..	1,826,945
1921	..	..	..	..	3,660,798
1922	..	..	..	..	2,098,018

Queensland, however, stands out invidiously from among the other States in this matter, being alone responsible for considerably more than half the total losses. The aggregate loss for the five years was £11,290,944, of which Queensland was responsible for £6,516,892. The relation may be put in another way by comparing the percentage of loss on cost of construction and equipment:

Year		All States		Queensland
1918	..	0.72	..	2.53
1919	..	1.03	..	3.46

Year		All States		Queensland
1920	..	0.83	..	2.71
1921	..	1.62	..	3.82
1922	..	0.90	..	3.72

The unfavourable position of Queensland in this respect is probably due in part to natural conditions. It is the largest of the States in area, with the exception of Western Australia, and it has the greatest length of railway-line open, serving for the most part a scattered rural population, and therefore bringing in a comparatively small revenue in proportion to working expenses, which are excessively high. The financial position of the Queensland railways cannot be attributed to cost of construction, which was low, being only £7,332 per mile, compared with £14,580 in Victoria and £16,337 in New South Wales; it is due to the discrepancy between receipts and expenditure. How far management is responsible it is impossible to say; but that has certainly not improved under the Labour administration. The deficit has been continuous and increasing, while the earnings of the employees per head are far below the pre-war level, and the proportion of accidents in 1922 was higher than in any other State. According to the Auditor-General's report, an annual deficit has been recorded for the last eight years, and in 1923 it had accumulated to a total of £9,882,000. As a whole the Australian railway system hardly witnesses to the efficiency of public ownership and control, since three different gauges are in use on the main lines, making inter-State traffic more difficult and expensive than it need be.

A Federal State enterprise which deserves mention

is the Commonwealth Line of Steamships, which consisted in 1923 of 50 vessels, having an aggregate gross tonnage of 253,876 tons. Of this fleet 17 are ex-enemy vessels; the rest are owned by the Commonwealth Government; 19, of about 3,350 tons each, were built in Australia in 1919-22 by the Commonwealth Government (8), the New South Wales Government (6) and in private yards (5); 5 larger vessels, of 13,850 tons, were built by Vickers at Barrow (3) and Beardmore, on the Clyde (2). The Line was started in 1916, and during the war made large profits, which in 1918-19 reached £1,160,034. In the following year the profits came down to £137,959, and in 1920-21, the last year for which details are given in the Commonwealth Year Book, to £102,994.

In the following years heavy and cumulative losses were incurred, and in 1923 the management was transferred to an independent Board, the capital value was written down from £12,766,588 to £4,718,500 and 21 ships were laid up to reduce the running losses. In February 1925 the Government decided to dispose of the fleet on the advice of the Board, which reported that the line could not be run without serious loss under the Australian register and subject to Australian labour awards. The sum written off and the losses then amounted to £11,091,631. The Prime Minister said that the loss could no longer be attributed to over-capitalisation; it was 'due to high running costs compared with those of competing lines and to labour troubles.'<sup>1</sup>

Australia is evidently the land to which we may look above all others for practical examples of State

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Herald*, Feb. 24, 1925.

ownership and control in the near future. For the present it would be unwise to draw hasty conclusions from the experience here briefly summarised, because the conditions during and after the war have been abnormal, though that consideration does not prevent Socialists from daily declaring the corresponding experience at home a convincing proof of the failure of private ownership. We shall have more material for comparison in a few years' time, but so far as it goes the Australian experience, and particularly that of Queensland, affords no evidence of the superior merits of public ownership and some to the contrary. It is much less convincing than the experience of Russia, being on a comparatively tiny scale, and of a mild and tentative character, but within its limits it points in the same direction.

If it is argued that the earning of profits is no proper criterion of success, one might reply that it is the criterion applied by Socialists themselves, who always quote any case of profits earned by a publicly-owned enterprise as a convincing proof of success and of the correctness of their theories. If profits are a proof of success, then losses are a proof of failure. But that line of argument in defence of the Queensland enterprises was cut off by the Socialist Prime Minister, Mr. Theodore, himself. In his electoral appeal at the election of 1915, which returned him to power, he said that 'finance was the basis of Government and the test of Government'; that in private life to earn £3 a week and spend £4 was the way to insolvency, and that the same rule applied to public finance. That is the way that Queensland has gone under his administration,



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

LOOKING back over the century reviewed in the foregoing chapters we see Socialism as an organised movement advancing in extent and in strength, not continuously or steadily, but still progressively, until it has in some measure gained a footing throughout the civilised world, and in many countries already has political power either in its grasp or within its reach. Is this process likely to continue until it acquires complete command? And, if so, what then?

To find an answer to these questions we must look more closely at the evolution of the movement, examine its purpose and character, observe the conditions and forces that aid or oppose it, and estimate, if possible, its chances of achieving the object and fulfilling the hopes of its promoters.

The first step in this inquiry is to obtain a clear idea of the object. The ultimate object may be expressed in some such general terms as: to improve society, raise mankind to a higher level, serve humanity, advance civilisation. This is obviously a quite general object, which is not confined to Socialism. Many other movements share it. Religion, for instance, the advancement of learning, science, philosophy, philanthropy, humanitarianism, utilitarianism, education, social

reform—all these, which existed long before Socialism made its appearance as an organised movement, professedly have the same object and urge their claims to attention and support on that ground. Many others of a different character make the same claim, less directly, perhaps, but quite definitely. We may, indeed, go farther, and say that there is none, including the very opposites of Socialism, that does not in the last resort justify itself on the ground of civilisation and the welfare of humanity. Militarism and Imperialism and Capitalism frequently do so. Individualism, which in its extreme form is Anarchism, emphatically does. The ultimate object, therefore, is not enough whereby to distinguish and judge Socialism, though some people appear to be content with it. We must differentiate, fix the specific attributes of Socialism, which mark it out and make it what it is.

The feature which at once differentiates it from all spiritual and intellectual movements for promoting the welfare of humanity is its economic character. It is primarily and essentially concerned with economic, that is, with material, conditions. It may look to intellectual and spiritual results, but as secondary, following on and dependent on, material conditions. The special subject-matter of its theory is the economic question of the production and distribution of wealth, and the specific aim of its activity is the transference of the means from private to public ownership. This is its immediate object, and the means of attaining its ultimate object. I have shown that this always been the object, though often obscured by

secondary and adventitious ideas, and to-day it is the stated object in every programme.

Here we have a clear line of demarcation between Socialism and non-economic movements for raising mankind, with which it is often confused. Christianity is the most frequent object of such confusion, and this will be a convenient place to deal with the relations between them. The confusion is particularly common in this country, though not altogether confined to it. In other countries the two are generally regarded as not only incompatible, but antagonistic, and the vast majority of Socialists are definitely anti-Christian. In this the Bolsheviki are quite orthodox. No argument is needed to prove that the materialist conception of history is absolutely incompatible with the belief in any divine power or any spiritual life. It is purely materialistic, and subordinates even intellectual activity to economic conditions. According to the explanation of it given by Engels, the political and intellectual history of any epoch is built up on the prevailing mode of production and exchange, and the ultimate cause and great moving power of all important historic events lies in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange. How that development and those changes come about he does not explain; he takes them for granted. They cannot be due to ideas, as less enlightened minds suppose, because they themselves precede and determine intellectual activity, according to the theory. We must suppose that they come about spontaneously and then settle everything else. What a philosophy!

There is obviously no room for any moral or spiritual element whatever in this view of life, and Mr. G. B. de Montgomery merely states a fact when he says that 'A real Marxian is always an atheist.'<sup>1</sup> With that school the body is supreme, and they are necessarily opposed to religion, which assumes a higher spiritual life, and would subject the lusts of the flesh to its control. That conception stands in their way. At one time, when they first began to enlighten the world, they gave free expression to their antagonism. 'We have simply done with God' (Engels); 'We open war upon God, because he is the greatest evil in the world' (Schall); 'It is our duty as Socialists to root out the faith in God with all our zeal, nor is anyone worthy of the name who does not devote himself to the spread of atheism' (Liebknecht). These are typical utterances of the early German disciples of Marx. When Lenin described religion as the 'opium of the people' to justify his persecution of the clergy he was merely repeating an old Marxian saying. They regarded religion with equal hatred and contempt, and denounced it as superstitious nonsense, a device invented by cunning and unscrupulous men to drug the people into insensibility.

Later this attitude of open antagonism was modified to one of contemptuous indifference, and it became the official policy to let religion alone and call it a 'private matter,' as explained in a Reichstag debate in 1903. The change was due to the discovery that violent attacks on religion were resented by important sections of workmen, and did not pay. The same thing has recently

<sup>1</sup> *British and Continental Labour Policy*, p. 86.

happened again in Russia. But there was no change of opinion; the contempt and hostility remained, and extreme anti-Christian pamphlets were still published. I have some, bought in Germany, but they were not confined to that country. One published in Bradford lies before me; it contains the following propositions among others: 'Christ is the enemy of Socialism; Christ's morality is directly antagonistic to Socialism; Christ's teaching is destructive of all human and social progress—in fact, Christ is the great enemy of mankind.'

There is, of course, nothing essentially new in this sort of thing. In every age the fool—with a universe that he does not even begin to understand all around him—has said in his heart, 'There is no God'; either because the idea of God makes him uncomfortable and he seeks to reassure himself, or because it offends his intellectual pride, which refuses to take cognisance of anything beyond the narrow range of his own senses. But Socialism has its own particular hostility to religion, which cannot be ignored in any account of the movement. The antagonism is not accidental but profound, and it has an important bearing on the effects and prospects of Socialism. Marxian Socialists, who think themselves wiser than the rest of the world, are forced by their own theory to fight or ignore one of the most powerful and persistent forces in human nature; and in doing so they themselves involuntarily testify to its indestructibility and power by making their anti-religious dogma into a religion of their own, as others in similar cases have done before them. The admission or claim is now often

made that Marxian Socialism is itself a religion ; and so it is, of a kind. It bears many of the signs, as I have said in the Introduction ; it has its sacred writings, which are regarded as inspired, and give rise to endless textual disputations ; it breaks up into jarring sects ; and it is now the chosen home of that spirit of self-righteousness, bigotry and intolerance which used to be called *odium theologicum*.

All Socialists, however, are not Marxians, though they all exhibit in some degree the last-mentioned characteristics ; and it is quite possible for anyone to be a Christian and at the same time hold that the public ownership of capital is desirable and in keeping with Christianity. But to identify them is quite a different thing. Several contributors to the book of definitions mentioned in the Introduction do this. It is here that the greatest confusion comes in ; and how great it is may be realised by comparing the opinions quoted above from the Bradford pamphlet with such definitions as that, for instance, of C. G. Ammon, M.P. : ' Socialism is the practical expression of Christ's teaching.' The statements are absolutely contradictory and irreconcilable. How does the matter really stand ?

The Christian idea of the Fatherhood of God and the consequent brotherhood of man undoubtedly suggests the sharing of things in common, as the early Christians felt, and as the founders of the numerous religious Communist settlements have felt after them. But there is a great gulf fixed between this idea and Socialism. The ideal Christian community rests entirely in the voluntary principle ; it presupposes the right spirit ; and the Christian

doctrine seeks to create that spirit by the moral law, addressed to the individual conscience as a command without any regard to external circumstances. This is the 'categorical imperative'—you ought to treat your neighbour as you wish to be treated, and to serve others ; it is your duty to do so ; that is your part in the scheme of things, and you will be held personally responsible for doing it or trying to do it, no matter what others may do ; they will have to answer for themselves ; that is not your affair, it is quite enough for you to attend to your own duty and do your bit, to use the language made familiar in the war. In other words, Christianity begins with the individuals, of whom society is composed, and puts the responsibility for right conduct on the shoulders of each ; and it is obvious that if they are right-minded society must be right, whereas if they are not society cannot possibly be, because they make it what it is.

Socialism begins at the other end, and proceeds on the opposite principle. It seeks to transform society by a mechanical change of 'the system,' and assumes that this will change the individuals, who will then automatically behave like brothers. They are relieved of all moral responsibility, which is placed entirely on 'the system.' No moral law is addressed to them ; none is recognised. It is replaced by the secular law ; that is to say, compulsion takes the place of volition. Human nature is to be changed and men made good by Act of Parliament, as Mr. Sidney Webb said at the Sankey Inquiry into the coal-mining industry in 1920. We hear now a good deal about the need of a 'new spirit' and a 'change of heart' ; and, indeed, it

is needed. But can that come from without by compulsion? When did an Act of Parliament ever change anybody's heart? It can control people's actions to a certain limited extent, but it has no effect upon their hearts.

Some of our (quite sincere) Christian or clerical Socialists may object that they do not give up the moral law or rely upon the system. Perhaps not as Christians; but as Socialists they do. Several years ago there was a discussion on this subject at a Church Congress, and among the speakers was a very well-known bishop, who said that there were some things he liked about Socialism and some he did not; and he proceeded to enumerate them. Those he liked were things it has in common with—that is, has borrowed from—Christianity; those he did not like were its distinctive features, the things that make it Socialism. Perhaps the gulf that separates them will become more visible to earnest but confused minds if they will try to fit these sayings—‘The Kingdom of God is within you’; ‘Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you’—into the class-war or any Socialist policy which promises to realise the prophecy of Isaiah by abolishing the private ownership of certain kinds of property. Let them ask themselves who made this dreadful system which is held responsible for all the evils existing in the world. It did not make itself; it is not an ordinance of Nature, but the creation of man. Men made it to please themselves, and if it is evil the responsibility is theirs alone. There is something wrong in them, which must be eradicated for any effective cure; they must be ‘born



again.' That is the teaching of Christianity, which is explicitly denied by Marxian Socialists, who think it absurd nonsense ; but it is also implicitly denied by others, who profess to hold it, but rely for salvation on a change of system, which is to create the required new spirit and automatically banish acquisitiveness, self-seeking and love of domination. Truly the Marxians are more logical.

These observations will, it is hoped, help to make clear the specific character of Socialism as a movement for the betterment of the world and the specific means it would apply to the solution of the problem. Throughout its history we find belief in a change of system as its animating principle. In the early days definite conceptions of a new and better system were formed, and attempts made to realise them on a voluntary basis, starting from small beginnings and growing outwards. It was thought that men would speedily see the benefits of the new order, and adopt it spontaneously and generally ; but those attempts failed because the new system would not work ; or, rather, men would not work it after a short trial. All went the same way sooner or later ; and an instructive feature common to such experiments is their tendency to develop an autocratic rule in order to keep the society together at all. The leaders have generally been or become autocrats, and when they were not the experiment fell the sooner to pieces. In this respect the Bolshevik leaders have merely followed the rule, but on a vast scale and with corresponding intensity.

At a little later stage in the history of Socialism, but still in the first period, the idea of State collectivism and nationalisation was developed by

Louis Blanc and Pecqueur, as described in Part I ; and here the principle of compulsion came in, to be carried over with the second period, in which it prevailed everywhere. This brings us to a point in the narrative to which sufficient attention has never been paid. The most remarkable feature in the history of the movement seems to me the break in continuity in the middle of the last century, followed by revival after a long interval. During this period the movement was not dead ; it was not finished and done with after the collapse of 1848. Socialism was still discussed and agitated, at least in France ; and in England the Christian Socialists of that time kept the name alive and gave it resonance. But these phenomena were in the nature of an after-glow ; the real movement was in a state of suspended animation, and it remained so for many years. If we regard the First International and the Lassallean movement in Germany as the earliest signs of revival, the interval was sixteen years. But there was little strength in either. The International was a debating society, the Lassallean movement small and local. It was not until a much later period—well-nigh forty years after 1848—that Socialism revived in good earnest. The decade 1880-90 witnessed this revival in France and England. Engels mentions the year 1887 as a landmark, and says that the Socialism of that date was almost the same as that of the Communist Manifesto. Why this long eclipse, and, if an eclipse, why a revival ?

It has been shown in Chapter I that Socialism was born in certain definite conditions, and appeared as a reaction against them. Now those conditions

underwent a great change and a great amelioration in the next twenty-five years. The economic effects of the war gradually passed away, and with them the extreme distress which prevailed, with occasional streaks of prosperity, from 1816 to 1836, when the tide fairly turned. This was one cause of the general subsidence of Socialistic agitation after the collapse of the revolutionary efforts in 1848; it had no longer the same material to feed upon. And in England, which was still the classical land of industrial development, improved economic conditions were reinforced by three other changes—the growth of a solid trade union movement, relief from economic pressure by emigration, and the legislative restraint on employers imposed by several Factory Acts, which seem small enough to-day, but which really represented a complete change of attitude, and marked a turning-point in social evolution. They signified the beginning of the end of ‘Manchesterism,’ or the arbitrary use by employers of the power over the employed given them by the ownership of the means of production. The reign of *laissez faire* was over, in fact, though it might still be maintained in theory as it was. There is an ironical contrast between the two in the formal adoption of the principle of ‘free trade’ in the year 1846, when that principle had already been breached at home, and was just about to have another large hole knocked in it by the Factory Act of 1847. Thenceforward free trade meant nothing but free imports into this country; but that is by the way.

The changes enumerated had a more practical effect in improving conditions than the previous

agitation, and this went on for several decades, during which they continued to operate on an extended scale. Hence the slow and feeble efforts to revive Socialism in the 'sixties, so different from the fervour and rush of thirty years before, and from the broader current of twenty years later. What is the explanation of the latter? Why did the movement, after so many years of immobility, spring into life again?

The immediate cause unquestionably was the great wave of depression which set in about 1874, after the feverish boom that followed the Franco-German war. It was divided into two periods, separated by a short interval of relaxation. The first reached its height in 1879, the second in 1886-87, and both were marked by unemployment on a large scale. Men used then to walk the streets carrying banners and singing a song :

We're out of work, poor labouring men,  
We can't get work to do.

No relief works, no labour exchanges, no distress committees, and, of course, no 'dole'; only trade union unemployment pay. That was in England, where the stress, like the antecedent prosperity, was greatest; but the economic interdependence of nations, already highly developed, made trade oscillations felt everywhere in some degree. And this experience fell on a new generation, which had known the recent prosperity but had never felt the deeper adversity of the more distant past. Its standard was higher.

The procession of the generations, each starting where the last left off, is a factor of the utmost importance, but commonly ignored. It is continually going on, and no precise date can be named for the entry of a new generation on the scene ; but it will be found on examining particular records that at intervals of about twenty years the waters begin to stir, and presently rise in some form or other which is determined by circumstances. The younger men have come on and the older have dropped off in the course of nature until the former outweigh the latter, and they are not content with the old order. There was a stirring in the 'sixties, but far less marked than in the 'eighties.

So the seed of Socialism fell on new and congenial soil in the latter period. A glance back at Part I will show how it took root in one country after another in that decade of depression. It was assisted in many by the rise of trade unionism, which occurred about the same time. In England, which was still far ahead of all other countries in this respect, that solid and sober trade unionism, which had taken the place of Chartism after 1848, and been a barrier against revolutionary agitation, itself became affected in the hungry 'eighties, and the New Unionism made its appearance. After that the story was broadly one of continuous advance, as already related, although there were spells of marked prosperity, and conditions, both inside and outside the workshop, were gradually transformed by (1) The growing power, defensive and offensive, of trade unionism, which progressively checked the arbitrary action of employers and secured shorter hours and better pay ; (2) The

cumulative effects of legislation and administration in social reform, dealing with working conditions—light, ventilation, safety, dust, dangerous trades, accidents, employment of children, hours of work—with public health and sanitation, water supply, housing, sickness and unemployment; and lastly by the achievements of private enterprise in industry and commerce, which lightened work by new appliances and processes, drew upon the world for new sources of supply, cheapened necessities and brought within the reach of all innumerable comforts, conveniences, pleasures, means of locomotion and communication, of instruction and recreation.

A volume would be needed to describe the latter alone. They quickly become so familiar that they are taken for granted, and people forget that many of them did not exist a generation or two ago, and none of them when Socialism began its career. Every year adds something to them, and brings them, one after another, more and more within the reach of all. Among the most recent may be mentioned motor omnibuses (electric tramways are already antiquated), charabancs, cinemas, broadcasting. Their introduction is sufficiently recent to be generally remembered; but the younger generations know nothing of the time when there were no sewing-machines, for instance, or cheap and sound sewing thread, or comfortable third-class railway carriages and ocean travel, seaside excursions and holidays, cheap newspapers, books and periodicals, fresh fruit and meat from overseas, paraffin lamps, bicycles and a thousand other things. To understand how great the change is

it is necessary to imagine—if one is not old enough to remember—life without them, and still more important things, such as a constant supply of purified water laid on under pressure—the greatest of all sanitary improvements.

Now all the agencies of change mentioned above developed and fructified most rapidly and widely in the very period that witnessed the modern growth of Socialism. I do not speak only of this country, which was still ahead of most others in material development at the beginning of the period. The growth of Socialism was world-wide, and it coincided in most countries with the rising standard of comfort. In Germany, for instance, the great economic expansion and rise of prosperity, which transformed the country and the outlook of the people, did not set in with full effect until about 1890, as the German Socialist, Dr. Paul Leusch, has pointed out in his book *Three Years of World Revolution*; and it coincided exactly with the great advance of Socialism shown above in Part I. The same double movement took place in other countries to a variable extent; the coincidence was general.

Here is an apparent paradox. We see Socialism advancing steadily, not with increasing misery, but with a rising standard of comfort. How is this to be explained? It is not really a paradox, but quite in accordance with a law of human psychology, as I will try to explain; but to understand it we must go a little deeper into the forces of social evolution.

The distinction between revolutionary and evolutionary movements has become very familiar, and it is recognised that the former are distinguished

by violent and sudden change, the latter by gradual and gentler action. The difference is thought of as one of method and policy, and so it is. But it really goes much deeper. Each has its own appropriate psychology, and these are entirely different. Violent and spontaneous popular upheavals arise from prolonged misery and oppression, which have become unbearable, and from which there seems to be no other way of escape. The people are 'goaded to desperation.' That was the case with the great risings in the latter Middle Ages—the Peasants' Revolt in England, the Jacquerie in France, the Ciompi in Italy, and the Peasants' War in Germany in the sixteenth century. These are large historical examples, and they show the psychology very clearly; it is one of desperation. The insurgents know very well the risks they run and the penalty of failure, but they take the risk; at all costs they must try to escape from the present suffering. 'Better die by the sword than live like this.' Innumerable smaller risings and insurrections have occurred from the same cause. Bread riots are the commonest of all, and sufficient of themselves to refute the theory, invented to explain the frequent lack of response to incitements, that extreme distress inclines the people to apathy, not to revolt. There is this truth in it, that they may be so held down by force, or so enfeebled, that they have not the power to revolt. That was the end of the large risings just mentioned; they were crushed with ruthless severity, just as the numerous risings have been in Bolshevik Russia—far more numerous than during any equal period of time in old Russia, and more mercilessly suppressed.



But though the power to revolt may be destroyed, the will remains, and presently reasserts itself, unless conditions improve.

These violent revolts are short ; they are either crushed or successful in procuring relief, which happens more often than the immediate results indicate. They not infrequently lead to eventual relief, even when suppressed at the moment. Sometimes they are completely successful, and then you get what is commonly called a revolution. Things are overturned and changes take place, but there is always a tendency in such cases to slip back again to the old order, not in form, but in substance. There is no staying power in the desperation revolt, because its aim is the negative one of relief from present suffering. Violent revolutions, not spontaneous but got up artificially, are still less lasting ; but they belong to a somewhat different category. The people are not really desperate, but are induced by mass suggestion to think they are for a short time.

The evolutionary kind of revolt rests upon a psychology which is almost the exact opposite. Perhaps the word 'revolt' is too often associated with violence to be quite appropriate ; but the movement I mean has an element of revolt in it, which distinguishes it from less conscious and weaker reform movements. It represents a positive reaction against existing conditions and aims at large changes, but achieved gradually and without violence. Its psychology is that of aspiration, not desperation, and so long as it makes fair headway it is entirely opposed to action appropriate to the latter. Its object is not to escape from intolerable

suffering, but to secure a progressively rising standard of life, which demands continuous effort and step-by-step advance, not a convulsive spasm.

Both types of movement have been reflected in Socialism; they correspond to the Reformist and revolutionary wings into which it is divided. That great and persistent division is a recognition of the fact that there are two paths; but Socialists, who are too emotional to be good psychologists, have never recognised the difference of psychology involved. The question has always been regarded as merely a matter of opinion about tactics, means and methods, at any rate since the earlier French Socialists, who were deeper thinkers, though more hazy, than their successors. The failure to see the underlying psychological difference has led to endless confusions and contradictions, both of theory and of policy. Marx was originally a revolutionary, and had a violent revolt in view, as set out in the Communist Manifesto; and the theory of increasing misery which must lead to a grand outbreak was perfectly suited to that kind of revolt. But when he declared the English Factory Act of 1847 to be the victory of a principle and a great step forward he did not perceive that this involved shifting the movement on to an entirely different psychological basis which was totally at variance with the theory, and called for different treatment. His followers were no clearer sighted, and went on repeating the formula appropriate to the one while pursuing the policy proper to the other. The revisionist school did indeed perceive the surface contradiction but not the underlying one, or they might have argued

their case more effectively. Nor have any intellectual lights of Socialism that I know of, except Georges Sorel, ever looked into the psychology of the problem or attempted to explain the actual course of their own movement. They have stood first on one leg and then on the other, now telling the workmen that they are in a miserable and hopeless plight, now reminding them of how much they have gained, how strong they are, and what splendid progress the movement has made, and urging them to further efforts on that ground ; in short, they have appealed to two contradictory states of mind.

Now the wage-earners' own spontaneous movement, broadly regarded, has always been of the aspiring type. They have aimed at the progressive improvement of their position by combination, co-operative enterprise and remedial legislation ; and this has been the prevailing character throughout. They have never taken to violent revolt on a large scale, though often urged to do so. Such action has been confined to particular local risings provoked by exceptional conditions. There were many incidents of this kind, both in England and in France, during the post-Waterloo period of extreme distress ; but they were isolated occurrences, and not typical of the general movement. They occurred chiefly, if not wholly, among textile and agricultural workers, who were particularly affected by the economic depression. The most striking case was that of the Lyons weavers, related in Part I. Theirs were real insurrections, provoked by a state of desperation, and bearing all the marks of that psychology ;

but they were local and exceptional. There was nothing like a general revolt, in spite of all the political agitation. Nor was there in England. The general tendency, even at that time, was to rely on improvement by peaceful and constitutional action.

And the Socialist movement then was in keeping with that character. However mistaken the early Socialists might be, their aims were constructive, and their attitude one of hope and encouragement, not of despair. So they won attention and favour until the movement began to assume a violent aspect in the 'forties. It was the Left Wing—the physical force men—who brought Chartism to grief in England, and it was the French Communists who played the same part in Paris; and the real reason was that both were out of tune with the broad current of popular feeling, alienated sympathy and did not commend the support of the general body of wage-earners, who wanted better conditions, not a violent upheaval.

That is why the Communist Manifesto of Marx fell so flat, and remained so long unheeded and unknown. It was in Russia, in the early days of Nihilism, that it was first taken up again; and it has always had more vogue there than anywhere else, not because Russia was economically suited to it, being very little industrialised, but because it was a call to violent revolution, and therefore highly attractive to the Russian intellectual agitators, who have always strongly inclined to that line of action because of the political conditions and their own temperamental extremism.

Socialism had at this point in its history got into the wrong road, and was diverging from the real course of advance. What that was I have shown above. The period that followed was anything but one of stagnation, except from the point of view of Socialism. On the contrary, it was one of great activity in other ways that I have already indicated, and the summary effects on the population in this country can be stated in a statistical form. In 1851—55 the average annual death-rate per 1,000 in England and Wales was 21.7, in 1881—85 it had fallen to 18.7; in 1850 the proportion of paupers per 1,000 was 56.7, in 1889 it had fallen to 25.0. I am dealing only with the period when Socialism was in abeyance. This massive evidence of improved conditions of life cannot be gainsaid; but later the improvement was much greater.

We come back to the revival of Socialism in the 'eighties and the application of my psychological theory to the movement that followed. I have already said that the immediate cause of this revival was the depression which set in after a period of great prosperity, and culminated in 1886—87. This sequence was a great shock to the aspiring Labour movement, which had been advancing without Socialism sufficiently well on the whole to satisfy current ambitions; it was a check to further progress, and shook faith in the existing agencies and policies. I have said above that the evolutionary form of advance, representing the psychology of aspiration, is opposed to a violent policy so long as it makes fair headway; but it stands a check very badly. The same psychology demands a progressive, though gradual,

advance, and if thwarted in one direction it turns to another. That was what happened in the 'eighties; the depression opened the door to new ideas, or ideas new to the men of that day, and especially the young men, who are never satisfied with the old standard. They could not even maintain the old standard, which had been rather artificially raised by the abnormal and unprecedented prosperity of 1872—75, due to the Franco-German War.

In short, the forces of progress on the old route seemed to be exhausted, and the time was ripe for a new departure. But at first the new Socialism made little impression and gained ground slowly, particularly in England. The Marxian formula of the class war and increasing misery was unattractive, and at variance with the real spirit of advance, which was strongest there, and had achieved most. The personal influence of Marx, it may be remembered, had repelled the trade unions at an earlier date and caused them to withdraw from the First International, which they had started. On the Continent, where trade unionism and social reform were in a backward state and the standard of living much lower, Socialism made a stronger appeal, especially in Germany, where it was more at home and had more suitable material to work upon. Yet even there its progress was very slow, until it became clear that though the party held to the Marxian formula its actual policy was directed to improving the conditions of living and working, not to promoting a violent upheaval. Socialism really began to make way when and so far as it adjusted itself in practice to the

psychology of aspiration, not of desperation, and went back to the constructive spirit of the early Socialists.

I say in practice, because in theory the Marxian dogma, which is wholly destructive, still held sway. I have shown the contradiction, reflected in the ubiquitous Reformist-Revolutionary division, in one country after another. In our own country, which has always been the most resistant to Marxism, as I have said in Part I, because it is the most practical and the most independent, the dogma never was generally accepted, even nominally. The largest and the most influential groups declined to adopt it, and the special jargon of the cult, universal on the Continent, has never come into common use. Only a few docile imitators of Germany or Russia talk about the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—terms which have reached the zenith of absurdity in the Bolshevist system. Evolutionary change was always the dominant note in British Socialism. But in effect the movement everywhere trod the same path, and gradually won more popular confidence. In this way it became associated with the great improvement in the conditions of living which ran parallel with economic development in this period. It stood forth as the special champion of workmen's interests in furthering a policy which answered to their aspirations—the policy of social reforms.

To show how conditions improved during this period I will again have recourse to vital statistics, which focus the net results of many and multifarious agencies in terms of life. The following table shows the fall in death-rates for a number of

countries between 1890 and 1914 or the nearest year for which I have returns :

DEATH-RATES			
Country	1890	1914	
Australia .....	14.3	10.5	
Austria .....	29.5	20.5	(1912)
Belgium .....	20.8	14.8	(1912)
Denmark .....	19.0	12.6	
England .....	19.5	14.0	
France .....	22.8	19.6	
Germany .....	24.4	15.0	(1913)
Italy .....	26.3	17.9	
Holland .....	20.5	12.4	
Norway .....	17.9	13.5	
Sweden .....	17.1	13.8	
Switzerland .....	20.9	13.8	
United Kingdom .....	19.4	14.4	

The improvement shown by these figures is great and general, and it suffices for my purpose, which is not to analyse the causes but to establish the fact. But for England I will add one more piece of summary evidence. I have shown above that between 1850 and 1890 pauperism fell from 56.7 to 25.0 per 1,000 of the population ; between 1890 and 1914 it fell further to 16.7 per 1,000.

The paradox of Socialism advancing all this time in favour, while the conditions of misery and oppression, to which it appeals, were gradually diminishing, has been partly, but not fully, explained. In a sense it may be said that Socialism advanced by not being Socialism, because it did nothing, and could do nothing, to fulfil its distinctive mission



of turning private into public ownership. It took part in social reform, in urging and shaping measures, and perhaps giving them a Socialistic twist ; but that was all. It was no more than what the Christian Socialists did in the middle of last century, and they have always been a laughing-stock to the Marxians. But this is not the whole story. The revival Socialists always kept their panacea—nationalisation or Socialisation—before the public eye, and it undeniably won increasing favour with organised labour, as a promise of far greater benefits to come. And this is also in keeping with the psychology of aspiration, which has the property of increasing desire with attainment, unlike the psychology of desperation, which seeks relief from immediate ills and is satisfied with it, like having an aching tooth extracted.

The saying ' the appetite grows with what it feeds on,' neatly expresses this truth, which has a quite general application. The higher a mountaineer climbs the more eager he is to master the peak beyond. The further a collector advances towards the completion of his collection the greater his desire to secure another piece. The cricketer who is approaching his hundred runs is far more concerned to make a few more than he was when he had made ten. It is the cleanest housewife who makes the most fuss about a little dirt. And this explains Herbert Spencer's observation that the more anything improves the greater the outcry made about it. The standard continually rises, and the very advance in the conditions of living heightens the desire for further advance at an accelerated pace. Men in this mood do not compare

what they have with the less they used to have, but with the more they hope to get ; and the procession of the generations continually reinforces the onward drive.

These considerations seem to me to afford an intelligible and rational explanation of the successive phases through which the Socialist movement has passed, and particularly of its broad advance on orderly and constitutional lines before the war. It held out a vague promise of unlimited benefits, which anyone could interpret into whatever he happened to want—like Home Rule in Ireland—and being spread by an intensely active and manifold campaign of propaganda, from the soap-box to academic dissertations, it inevitably attracted the growing body of support revealed by successive elections in one country after another.

The same considerations apply to the effects of the war and its after-consequences. Regarded in perspective as one vast picture, they present two distinct influences or currents moving in different directions. On the one hand, the war acted like a forcing-house on the previous aspiring movement through the unlimited demand in belligerent countries for man and woman power at all costs, and in neutral ones for goods. Organised labour was raised to a new plane of importance by the deference paid to leaders and the appeals to trade unions for assistance, military and industrial; and the great wave of artificial prosperity raised the general standard of comfort to a height never thought of before. And all this under a sort of nationalisation. On the other hand, the misery caused by war and the much more extensive misery

that followed the general post-war economic collapse fed the spirit of violent revolt, particularly in the beaten countries, among which Russia was included. The atmosphere on this side of the picture was like that of beaten France and besieged Paris in 1871, but spread over a vast canvas. It then produced a revolution in France and the convulsion of the Commune—the Commune that Marx admired so much ; in 1917—18 it produced many revolutions, and the resuscitation of Marx—the revolutionary Marx of the Communist Manifesto and the class war.

Since then these two forms of Socialism, brought face to face on the field of actuality and not merely in theory, have striven for the mastery with varying fortunes, at different times and in different places. The outcome of the struggle between them will be determined by the psychological principles explained above, and it is not in doubt. The policy of violent revolution has no chance at all of success ; the moment for that is past, if there ever really was one, and the latest events at the end of 1924 go to prove it—namely, the Communist rising and its suppression in Esthonia, the anticipatory crushing of the Communist plot in France, and the general election in Germany. But Bolshevism may give a great deal of trouble and cause much disorder yet. If it does, the effect will be, not to secure the triumph of the Left Wing, but to drag down the Right with it and involve the whole movement in a general collapse by provoking a decisive reaction against it, as in 1848, but on a vastly larger scale. This is quite likely to happen unless the Right Wing not only shake off

their own Left Wing more decisively than they have done, but also cease to coquette with Bolshevik Russia and the Communist International, whose policy and practice they profess to dislike, but habitually defend, excuse, assist or ignore when defence is impossible. Attempts to whitewash Bolshevism are quite futile. It has been put to the test of experience, and presents an object-lesson to the world so large and obtrusive that no one can miss it. Nor is there any need to go to hostile sources of information. Quite sufficient evidence is furnished by the public utterances of its own leaders, whose extreme volubility continually thwarts the efforts of defenders by flatly contradicting their facts and arguments.

But let us assume that this does not happen, and that the Right Wing escape the danger and proceed upon the course of gradual and constitutional advance towards their goal. How will they fare? My diagnosis leads me to the conclusion that they are likely to gain ground, not rapidly or immediately, but, on the whole progressively, until their policy has been put to the test of experience much more thoroughly than it has yet been; for these minority Socialist administrations and little experiments in Australia are not enough for a real test. Numbers rule to-day, and the promises of Socialism are too attractive to many, who have too much reason for present discontent, not to win increased support; and recent elections confirm that view. Here in Great Britain, in spite of the great Conservative rally which represented a reaction against Bolshevism, the Labour Party's poll was convincing evidence of a progressive advance in popular

favour ; and the figures given in the last chapter show a similar tendency in other important countries. The only things likely to interrupt the forward march that I can see are the Left Wing influence, which we have hypothetically eliminated, and a period of marked prosperity, which can hardly be expected. Let us assume, then, for the sake of argument, that Socialists have secured the reins of power. The next question is, What will they do ? Will they satisfy the expectations of their supporters ? And how ?

We must first get a clearer idea of what the expectations are that they have to satisfy ; and it will be a good thing for non-Socialists to think a little about this. The desires of the wage-earners, who are the chief clients of Socialism, are most concisely expressed in the motto of the French General Confederation of Labour, the great Syndicalist organisation. It is a very interesting motto, but overlooked by all the writers on the subject, who have studied it from books, not from life. It is *Bien-être et Liberté*—‘ Comfort and Liberty.’ *Bien-être* means a little more than comfort, but that is the best popular equivalent. The formula was used by Morelly in his sketch of a perfect Society in 1755, but the Confederation probably does not know that. Comfort, which includes security, and liberty are in truth what everybody wants ; but for Socialism the problem is the desire of the wage-earners for them. Comfort, as expressed in wages, cost of living and material condition in general, has usually been regarded as the chief, if not the only, object, and wages as the most important item, at any rate in

the relations of wage-earners and wage-payers—or capital and labour—which is at the centre of the problem.

But in recent years increasing stress has been laid on liberty, and some good judges think it has come to be the more important of the two. I am inclined to agree with them. It is so to Syndicalists, and this is the reason for Syndicalism. As I have explained in Part I, it represented a reaction against State Socialism, which the workmen argued would deprive them of all liberty. That is the distinctive mark of Syndicalism as a Labour movement, not violence, as George Sorel argues. He seems to think that strikes, and particularly the general strikes, are forms of violence. Not at all; they may entail violence in the sequel, but that is another matter. The general strike is the 'strike of folded arms' or the 'stay-at-home' strike, and is the negation of violence. In any case strikes are only means to the Syndicalists; their great object is to get rid of employers, public even more than private, so that workmen may be their own employers, as William Carpenter suggested in 1831, and mainly for the sake of liberty.

The demand for liberty, of which Syndicalism is the most emphatic assertion within the Labour movement, is not confined to it. Among trade unionists at large it finds expression in the modern cry for a 'share in control' or a 'voice in the management,' and it has changed the attitude of State Socialists. They were very hostile to Syndicalism, when it arose, for obvious reasons, because it was a trade union revolt against their own system of State control. They belittled it, and endeavoured

to treat it as negligible; but the principle it represented was too strong to be ignored, and was eventually incorporated in many official programmes. It will be sufficient to quote as an example the resolution passed at the Geneva Congress in 1920 (see Chapter II), which is one of the clearest and most authoritative pronouncements on the subject :

‘ By socialisation we understand the transformation from ownership and control by capitalists to ownership and control by the community of all the industries and services essential for the satisfaction of the peoples’ needs ; the substitution, for the wasteful production and distribution with the sole object of private profit, of efficient production and economical distribution, with the object of the greatest possible utility ; the transformation also from the economic servitude of the great mass of the actual producers under private ownership to a *general participation in management by the persons engaged in the work.*’

I have italicised the concluding phrases, which bear on the point in question. It appears much less distinctly in the aims and objects of the New (Labour and Socialist) International quoted in Chapter II. The phrase ‘ economic emancipation of the workers from capitalist domination ’ may or may not be held to imply their participation in management ; but there can be no doubt that this

principle, sometimes called industrial democracy or democracy in industry, has taken firm root, and will form an integral part of future Socialist policy. This is one more line of cleavage between Western Socialism and Russian Communism or Leninism, which hangs on the principle of extreme centralisation and 'iron rigid discipline' imposed by the central authority, as I have repeatedly shown from its own official utterances.

What the Socialist Governments of the future—whose existence we have hypothetically assumed—will have to do, therefore, is to provide the wage-earners with more comfort ; that is, better material conditions, and more liberty, and at the same time serve the public better than it is served now. They will have to do better than Capitalism in all these respects or go back to it, as Lenin said in 1918.

It is no part of my purpose here to extol Capitalism. I have no reason to love it myself, and I see its defects as plainly as anyone can. I have been observing them closely and widely in many countries all my life, because observation of actual conditions has been a passion with me from boyhood, and I have had exceptional opportunities of gratifying it in the investigation of conditions in industries of every kind ; also of public health, outbreaks of epidemic disease, housing, drink, unemployment, emigration and immigration, in hospitals, asylums, night shelters and trampsteamers. I knew all the black spots in London described by Mr. Charles Booth before they were cleared away ; I know the worst slums in all our great towns ; I have studied the rag-pickers and thieves' kitchens in Paris ; visited the night-refuges of



Petersburg in the middle of the night, the same in Hamburg, the Salvation Army shelters in London, 'opium dens' and the like, to mention a few examples of the extreme results of Western civilisation at the bottom of the scale. I mention this experience to show that I do know the worst—the wounds and bruises and festering sores. And I know the opposite end of the scale, too. I recognise the immense disparity, the misuse of wealth and power, the waste and inefficiency. They are as repugnant to me as to anybody.

But I also recognise the other side. I have witnessed great changes, great improvements, the conscientious and beneficent use of wealth and station, the progressive equalisation of real conditions by the agencies previously mentioned. The process has been gradual and interrupted by set-backs, but it has gone on. Free individual enterprise and competition, which provoked the reaction of Socialism, have been gradually limited—they never were really unrestricted—by one agency after another, until the original arguments against them have lost all force and meaning. Indeed, the boot is on the other leg now, and they are being suffocated by over-restriction. Perhaps this is what is meant by the contention that Capitalism is decaying and must give place to Socialism, which would extinguish them altogether. The question is what effect this would have. What valid reason is there to suppose that public ownership, with or without industrial control, would be an effective remedy—that it would remove the existing evils, maintain an increasing population on a rising standard of living, as Capitalism has

done,<sup>1</sup> and give wage-earners the increased comfort and liberty—especially liberty—to which they, most legitimately, aspire? Is there any evidence to support these assumptions? Surely that is a reasonable question, deserving a serious answer. The indictment against Capitalism is easily drawn; anybody can do it. All that is needed is to enumerate existing evils—poverty, vice, crime, ignorance, disease, waste and war—and say that they arise from Capitalism. The charge is very much overdrawn, because all these things existed, and exist, without Capitalism. But let that pass; indictments are generally overdrawn. The question is the value of the proposed remedy. Why should we assume that all these curses will be changed into so many blessings by Socialism, and without any drawbacks whatever? That is how the case is usually presented. But to establish any case in the Courts of Reason assumptions are not enough; they must be backed by evidence.

There is some. The little model settlements called Utopian may be set aside, although their history is highly illuminating and deserving of more study than it has received; but modern Socialists consider them irrelevant, as in a sense they are. The so-called nationalisation imposed

<sup>1</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Webb, in their book on *The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation*, admit that in the middle of the last century Capitalism had 'produced, on balance, a surprising advance in material civilisation for a greatly increased population.' But it has since produced a much greater advance. Sir Josiah Stamp's statistical examination of incomes led him to the conclusion that in this country the average income of all classes in 1924 was twice what it had been in 1801, and that the pound had twice the purchasing power, so that all classes were four times as well off in real comforts and commodities, and the standard of living four times as high, and at the same time the population has increased fourfold.

during the war may be also set aside, though it is not without its lessons ; the conditions were too abnormal to afford a fair example of Socialism proper. This is concerned with the standing economic order, which is broken up by war and suspended for the time being. All efforts are concentrated on war, which can be conducted only by the State, and consequently the necessary co-ordination and control of the multifarious activities involved must also be in the hands of the State. If the claim of Socialism to superiority is based on the superior military efficiency and capacity to carry on war of a system of State control, then the claim must be allowed ; but do intelligent Socialists make it ? In any case, the experience had nothing to do with normal economic efficiency. The war industries and services were for the time being placed in the same category as the Forces, and were carried on regardless of expense, on borrowed money. If Government control at one time cut down the expense, that proved that the State had previously been making bad contracts, which were discovered by persons brought in from outside. As for food control, Europe was virtually in a state of siege, and rationing, which can be carried out only by Government, was enforced everywhere. In short, the whole experience was outside ordinary civil life. And it was a very disagreeable one, entailing great restriction of liberty, and accepted only as a necessary and temporary evil, to be abandoned as soon as possible by common consent. The experience is either irrelevant or fatal to Socialism. If the electorate were asked, Do you wish to go back to wartime control ? the

answer would be a general shout of ridicule at the question.

We must look elsewhere for practical tests of Socialisation. The greatest experiment is that of Russia, where one system has been applied after another. The value of this evidence is great, and independent of the means used by the Bolsheviks to secure power. Their economic aims are identical with those of other Socialists, and they have had every opportunity of realising them in very favourable circumstances, according to the accounts of Lenin and Trotsky, quoted in Chapter I, because of the natural resources of the country. They have tried State ownership and control, workmen's control, a mixture of both, a combination of State ownership with private enterprise, and the last is the only system which has had any success. The very first economic result of their administration was famine, in a food-exporting country. The 'former surplus' ceased to exist in 1918, as Lenin said, and was replaced by a deficiency, causing the pangs of hunger over a wide area. And this was before the civil war, the blockade, the drought and all the other reasons subsequently put forward. It was due entirely to the economic system introduced by the Government and the consequent refusal of the producers to supply corn at unremunerative prices, precisely as in England in the year 1314, when prices were fixed by Parliament to prevent profiteering, and all food vanished from the markets.' The Russian experience in regard to the food supply is particularly instructive, because Capitalism has so completely abolished famine

from this country, which was formerly liable to it in some degree every bad season, that the mere possibility was forgotten until the war, which suspended the working of Capitalism. The banishment of famine is surely no small achievement, but it is never mentioned. We may usefully contrast it with the institution of chronic famine in Russia.

Since the ideal system has proved unable to keep the people alive there, whatever else it may have done, and whatever excuses may be made for it, no one can contend that it has increased the general well-being ; and the ' iron rigid discipline ' on which the Bolshevik rulers have continually insisted, with complete suppression of free speech, is hardly compatible with increased freedom for the rank and file. The changes of system they are perpetually trying may improve matters a little, but are themselves proof of previous failure. Nor would it be enough for them to do as well as Capitalism, from which they are still a long way off ; to prove superiority they must do better.

What evidence is there outside Russia ? Not much from Socialist enterprises directly inaugurated as such, but a great deal from the working of public ownership in many national and municipal undertakings, which are frequently quoted by Socialists as examples of the principle. We have them daily before us, and can judge for ourselves. What is our actual experience ? On the whole in this country it is rather negative than positive. The case against them has been as much exaggerated by opponents for controversial purposes as the

case for them by advocates. It is useless to contend that nationalisation or municipalisation in itself involves ruin, the end of civilisation and so on, without any discrimination, when we daily live and move and have our being among national and municipal enterprises. The public, whose mind I am trying to interpret, are not impressed by such overdrawn arguments. Neither, on the other hand, are they impressed by the opposite contention that these public enterprises are so vastly superior to private ones as to warrant extension of the principle to everything. Their experience does not support either contention. If it did, there would be a general demand, in the one case for the abolition of such ruinous experiments, in the other for the immediate extension of such a brilliantly successful and beneficial system. But there is no such demand. The public at large accept the limited Socialised services at present existing, but without enthusiasm ; they show no general desire to go back to private enterprise and none to go forward on the same path. I am speaking of this country, and I call it a negative conclusion. Elsewhere the case is different, as I shall presently show.

The enterprises referred to are mainly mature concerns, providing some necessary service, and holding a monopoly of it. They have been nationalised or municipalised for various reasons. The postal service is the most general of all. It arose several centuries ago out of the Royal service of messengers dispatched on State affairs, which was gradually developed into a general mail and passenger service for revenue. Its evolution was stimulated by innumerable private ventures, and

the passenger service dropped out when better means were thereby provided. It has absorbed many competing enterprises started by private initiative, and not always to the public advantage. To this day the postal service is everywhere carried on with the aid of private agencies, and in the United States the parcel post, as well as the telephone, is still in private hands. Complaints of inefficiency in the Post Office are common in every country. It has never given a lead, but is maintained as a revenue-producing concern. There is no demand for abolishing State ownership and control of the mails, but much opposition to the policy it entails of absorbing new and competing means of communication developed by private enterprise. As a whole the evidence from the postal service is mixed and inconclusive.

The next largest public service, apart from such things as can from their nature be administered only by the State, is that of the railways, which in most European countries and in some others are to a large extent nationalised. In some cases they were State enterprises from the first ; in others they were acquired with a view to military purposes ; but that does not lessen their value as examples of State ownership and control in civil life. Railways are particularly interesting, because they afford opportunities for comparison, and because they are very suitable for nationalisation, being mature and well-defined monopolies. In this country, where public ownership has always been kept in view by Parliament, railways are one of the first items down for nationalisation on Socialist programmes. But experience in other countries,

where they are already nationalised, is leading in a different direction. The State systems are being modified, and a policy of partial 'denationalisation' is being widely adopted. It takes different forms, but they all represent the reintroduction of private enterprise in some measure. The State remains the owner, but control and management are entrusted either to an autonomous and independent statutory body or to a private company by lease. One or other of these systems, or else a sort of partnership between private capital and the State, has been adopted in Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Austria, Brazil, Canada and South Africa, and is contemplated in Sweden, Czecho-Slovakia and New South Wales. In Belgium the local railway systems, which have been highly extolled, have since 1884 been administered by a quasi-public company, and many have been leased to private enterprise.

This movement away from nationalisation as generally understood is due partly to experience of the ill-effects produced by the interaction of political influences and administrative activities and partly to the economic inefficiency of direct State control. The Committee of Investigation appointed in Sweden by Dr. Branting's Socialist Administration reported to that effect in 1924 and propounded a scheme for the reorganisation of the State railways. But 'denationalisation' is by no means confined to them; it extends to many other enterprises, and in some cases has been carried to the point of complete transference back from public to private ownership. In Germany the practice of leasing municipal undertakings to private companies has been followed for many years; it began



with tramways, but has gone on to other services, and is being taken up by one town after another. In France, where nationalised industries are varied, numerous changes in the other direction have taken place. Among the concerns affected are coal mines, potash mines, ammonia factories, hydro-electric works—all placed under a system of mixed control. Railway workshops, the mercantile fleet, arsenals and the wireless service have been transferred to private enterprise ; but the manufacture of matches and tobacco, which are objects of standing popular dissatisfaction, remain under full State control. In Italy the telephone and parcels post have been retransferred from public to private control. In Czecho-Slovakia a process of 'commercialising' the somewhat extensive national undertakings has been going on since 1922, and, though it does not amount to denationalisation, it runs in that direction.

The most striking case, however, is naturally that of Russia, where nationalisation was carried much farther than anywhere else. Under the new economic policy a large number of small private concerns employing not more than 10 to 20 persons have reverted entirely to their former owners, and of those still State-owned some thousands have been let on lease to private enterprise. At the beginning of 1924 there were in Moscow 660 so treated, and the total number appears to have been between 6,000 and 7,000. They included metal works, textiles, paper, printing, wood, leather, chemicals and other branches of industry ; the largest group was food and drink. It is these concerns that have made the greatest advance

towards economic recovery. They have thrived and competed so successfully with the State enterprises that in 1924 the Soviet authorities began to view them with alarm and to contemplate modification of the new economic policy. In addition to the leased concerns concessions have been granted to private capitalists to work State enterprises or properties, including mines, transport, metallurgical works and industries. Such economic recovery as has been effected in Russia is due to the reintroduction of private enterprise and capital, which has given the public better service and brought in more revenue to the State.

I draw the conclusion from all this experience that where public ownership and control has proceeded beyond the very limited class of services previously defined the balance of evidence is distinctly against it, and even within that class it is doubtful. Municipal gas supplies are probably more often quoted as proofs of efficiency than any other public service, because they generally yield a profit (which must, by the way, be sweated out of the gas-workers, according to the Marxian theory). But in the greatest of all towns, which is London, the gas supply remains in private hands ; nor is there any demand for its transfer to a public authority. In London, again, some of the tramways are municipal, others privately owned. The latter are quite as good as the former. If there is any perceptible difference, it is that the conductors on the privately owned lines are rather more civil and obliging than their municipal colleagues.

This brings me to another point, which is the effect of public service on the disposition and

behaviour of those engaged in it. One of the great arguments for Socialism—indeed, the whole claim turns eventually upon it—is that people will behave quite differently when the evil motive of profit is eliminated from economic life and they are engaged in production ‘for use, not profit.’ Does our daily experience lend any support whatever to this assumption? We come constantly into contact with persons so engaged ; does the motive of public service inspire in them that joyful alacrity and general good-will which are confidently expected to distinguish them in Socialised industries? There is not a sign of it among those with whom the public come most in contact. On the contrary, they ordinarily display far less alacrity and friendliness than those engaged in private business. Compare the people in the post-offices and the shops. The demeanour of the former varies from a casual indifference to a barely veiled hostility which conveys the impression that the customer is a nuisance, to be grudgingly served as a favour. It is natural. There is no reason why they should wish to please customers, who are nothing to them, and who do keep them from more agreeable occupations. All they have to do is to keep the rules. In the shops the demeanour is just the opposite, for the reverse reason. It is their interest to please ; and regular intercourse between tradesmen and customers tends to establish friendliness, because they mutually oblige each other. If not, they part company, because there are alternatives—other shops and other customers. In public services there are no alternatives and no incentive to oblige on either side. So intercourse is carried on in a mood either

of cold indifference or of suppressed antagonism. Private business is, in truth, a great social cement, which vanishes when officialism appears on the scene.

And the change of heart? Are those engaged in public services less self-seeking, less self-assertive, less jealous, less combative, more willing, more conscientious, more content than other people? Not in the least. Surely if there were any justification for the promised change there would be more sign of it. And how can it be expected in the future Socialist order, when support for that cause is won by systematically appealing to the opposite motives, and fostering self-assertion, greed, envy, hatred, discontent and pugnacity?

The conclusion suggested by the examination of actual experience and of the facts daily before our eyes is that they furnish no evidence to support the expectation either of increased efficiency or of a higher social consciousness to be secured by public ownership and control, but rather the contrary. If the inquiry be extended and applied to the questions of the conditions of living and liberty of the workmen, the result is no better. The Prussian coal mines of the Saar are a good example. They were well managed, and credited with 'brilliant results,' though not better than those of the privately owned mines; but the miners were worse off, according to the testimony of that eminent Socialist, M. Vandervelde. 'They complain of being worse paid, and they are in all cases less free than those in private employ, such as, for instance, that of the Rhine-Westphalian Syndicate.' The State housed some of its miners well, but the

Syndicate housed theirs better ; and the mine-owners in the North of France did better still.

I am not contending that public ownership has no advantages in certain cases and is never desirable. What I ask is evidence from experience that it would achieve the moral and material transformation which Socialists promise themselves from its general application ; and I can find none. I am aware that Marxian Socialists do not admit State-ownership, as the State has hitherto been constituted, to be Socialism at all. There must first be the ' conquest of political power by the proletariat,' which will turn it into something quite different. Well, they have got it in Russia, and it certainly is something quite different, but not in the promised direction. They have got it, too, by constitutional means, in Australia, and the results hardly support the case. We shall have it here when the Labour Government, whose future triumph I have hypothetically assumed, comes into power. That will be the ' proletarian State,' if that ridiculous expression has any meaning at all. What will it do ? What can it do ?

It will have to deal with realities, not with phrases and fancies ; and the Labour Party leaders, having held office, have learnt the difference. They will be judged by results, like other parties, and their tenure of office will depend upon their success. A Government cannot remain in power by force against the general will in any democratic country, as the Bolsheviks have done. And results must not be too long delayed. Visions of the Co-operative Commonwealth a few centuries hence, the ' withering away of the State ' and all that Marxian

stuff, will not do ; nor will the ' transitional stage ' excuse be accepted. The people want improved conditions—more comfort and liberty—here and now. They have been taught to expect them by Socialist propaganda, and a Socialist Government will be required to deliver the goods. The best-informed and clearest-headed leaders know very well that there are natural as well as political obstacles to the realisation of ideal schemes. There are time and space, physical laws and the rules of arithmetic, as well as human nature. It is easy to ignore them in theory-spinning and propaganda, but fatal in real life ; they are masters of the situation, and immovable. The limits they set make large and rapid changes impracticable for constructive purposes. All sober-minded Socialists have recognised that advance towards their goal must be gradual. Mr. Sidney Webb, who is one of them, has called it the ' inevitability of gradualness.'

But that is not the doctrine taught the people by candidates for their support and by agitators who freely promise miracles. And thereby a dangerous situation is created. In the day of power miracles will be demanded, and an attempt will be made to supply them. The sober-minded will no longer control the situation ; if they do not make the attempt they will have to give place to others who will. This is the fate of demagoguery throughout history. Passions are aroused which can be neither satisfied nor allayed, but which force an attempt to satisfy them. And in dealing with the economic structure of society this is more than dangerous ; it is fatal. The thing is so

complicated and delicate that improvement is slow and difficult, but destruction is easy and swift. How easy and swift, and how irreparable, Bolshevism has shown. In attempting to improve and equalise the distribution of wealth, which is the aim of all Socialists, the Bolsheviks killed its production. They have been trying to revive it ever since, and are to-day still crying for more productivity. Every other community which proceeds on the same lines and meddles roughly with the forces of production on theoretical grounds will come to the same pass in proportion to the distance travelled along the same road.

This is not to say that no advance can be made, or is being made, towards that amelioration and emancipation, which should be the proper goal of Socialism. Advance is being made all the time, but on quite different lines. The old anti-capitalist theories, to which Socialists cling with pathetic obstinacy, are obsolete, left behind by the actual march of events. In the comparatively small field of public enterprises the tendency, as I have shown, is towards delegating the operation to independent statutory bodies or private companies, which preserve an element of individual enterprise and initiative. But the great movement in economic evolution to-day is towards realising the historical interpretation and forecast of Considérant—from slavery to serfdom, from serfdom to wage-earning, from wage-earning to partnership—and the vision of William Thompson of all productive labourers as capitalists.

I will conclude by putting the whole question on the broad and philosophic basis of Pierre Leroux's

saying that Socialism is an extreme or exaggerated assertion of the social principle and therefore just as fallacious as Individualism, which is an extreme assertion of the individual principle. This goes to the root of the matter, and explains why Socialism fails and must fail to answer to the needs of mankind. Fleeing from one extreme it rushes to the other. Neither of these essential attributes of human nature can be made to over-ride the other with success ; they are equally deep-seated, powerful and indestructible. Men must live together, being social animals ; their nature demands it and their welfare depends on it. But on the other hand life resides in the individual, who is the source of all movement, initiative and advance. If Individualism leads to anarchy and the break-up of society, Socialism entails stagnation and decay.

Socialists are now rather by way of recognising the value of individuality ; they promise to cultivate it by their system far better than it has been. Just so Individualists promised to create a more perfect social order by their system. They were mistaken ; it was found that individual freedom became incompatible with social needs and it had to be restricted. Similarly the Socialists are mistaken now ; individuality cannot flourish and perform its function under their system of control. Writing of Mr. Lansbury's retirement from the *Daily Herald*, to start a new paper of his own, Mr. Brailsford said in the *New Leader* of February 6, 1925 : ' It may be inevitable that individuality such as his should find it impossible to work under the control of a party.' Quite so ; and much more so under the more rigid control that any



system of Socialism must impose. Mr. Brailsford thinks it a loss: 'Better incessant indiscretions and contradictions than the dullness of the dictated middle course.' Quite so again; and the same principle holds good of economic activities. Better miscalculations and failures than the stagnation of dictated routine. Individual enterprise, which gives scope to exceptional capacities, cannot be withdrawn or suppressed without loss to the community; and, whatever Socialists may profess, it must be suppressed under any system of Socialism, for it is bound up with Capitalism which they would abolish. The Bolsheviki have found it so. They suppressed private enterprise, and production fell 70 or 80 per cent.; to recover it they had to re-introduce Capitalism and just in so far as they have done so has that improvement been effected which their admirers proclaim to the world.

Socialism aims at levelling inequalities by changing the whole economic system. If could succeed only by putting fetters on the more capable and levelling down; to level the incapable up is impossible because they are born so, and natural incapacity is susceptible of very little change. But this is not to say that conditions cannot be made more equal and more equitable by other means, without depriving society of the great asset of individuality.

To discuss the subject fully at the end of this book is impossible; I can only point out the movement and indicate its significance. It is a multiple movement, which takes many forms, and varies with circumstances like all real economic movements. The Marxian conception of a single type

of economic organisation, which was to be completely overturned and to give place to another single type, never bore any relation to reality. The wage-earners are becoming capitalists and partners in several ways, some old, some new, and the practice is spreading rapidly. A new and powerful instrument has recently been created by the institution of Labour Banks. This move is a direct and spontaneous outcome of the modern financial development of Capitalism which Socialists constantly call to witness as proof of the latter's impending downfall—namely, the control of industry by the banks. And it naturally began in America, where that control is most highly developed, and has in recent years been turned against the trade unions. Instead of depositing their funds in investment banks, where it is used against them, the trade unions have entered the financial field and are setting up banks of their own. The movement has grown with extraordinary rapidity. It began only in a small way in 1920, but in 1923 there were already a dozen banks existing in different parts of the country, with combined resources exceeding £9,000,000, and as many more in course of construction. The growth seems too rapid to be sound, and ardent advocates certainly allow their enthusiasm to run away with them, as advocates of new things usually do, when they predict that within ten years the 'workers' will secure the control of credit. They will not do that, and the structure may collapse within the period assigned more quickly than it has arisen. But, wisely and cautiously handled, as it appears to have been so far, it may secure the wage-earners a large share

in the control of credit and of industry through the acquisition of shares in industrial undertakings on a larger scale than hitherto. It has already made remarkable progress in that direction.

At any rate it is a highly interesting movement, with great possibilities, and a symptom of the real economic development of our time, which is not towards the overthrow of Capitalism, but towards its gradual modification without disruption and without sacrificing its merits. Socialists will, of course, contest and ridicule this view, because they are too obsessed by their fixed delusion to see the actual course of events. And for a time they will carry on. But when the wage-earners learn from experience, as they will, that moderate Socialism can do them no substantial good, even if it does them no harm, and that extreme Socialism means common ruin, its progress will be stayed, and it will give place to other movements better suited to the realities of social evolution.

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<sup>1</sup> The figures given under this reference relate to the pre-war period only. In 1922 ballots had been taken by 173 Unions; in 15 cases there was a majority against the levy, in 158 in favour. The political fund had risen from £6,845 in 1914 to £267,787

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